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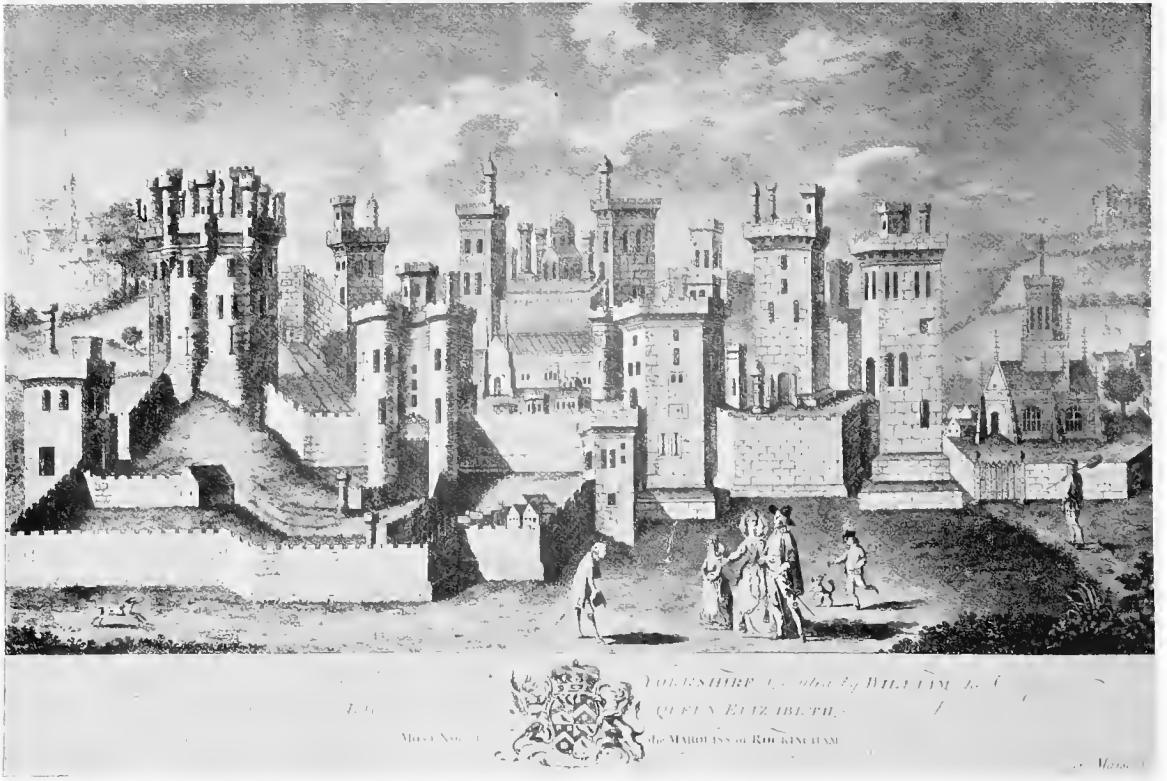

Pontefract Castle in the Fifteenth Century.

Chronicles

OF

Old Pontefract

BY

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(Author of "Castleford and District in the Olden Time.")

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Chronicles of Old Pontefract.

PREFACE.

The design of the Compiler of these "Chronicles of Old Pontefract" has been to compress within the limits of an easily accessible volume the broad outlines of the history of this ancient Borough, more especially as it is interwoven with the general history of England.

The indefatigable labours of Boothroyd and Fox during the early part of the last Century have laid the present writer under obligations which it would be impossible to exaggerate. In their day, however, the Public Records—since transcribed by the various Archæological Associations—were largely inaccessible, and hence errors into which these early historians fell have since been corrected by subsequent writers, more especially by the late Mr. Richard Holmes, F.A.S., of Pontefract—a painstaking and enthusiastic antiquary, whose researches into Pontefract history deservedly entitle him to a place in the front rank among our local celebrities.

It is unnecessary to discuss here the relative value of the authorities upon which the writer has relied for much of the information contained in this volume; their mere enumeration would more than occupy a page, and the more important of them are referred to in the footnotes.

As the old monkish chroniclers were in many cases largely subservient to the times in which they lived, the difficult duty

of the historian is patiently to explore, collate, analyse and weigh impartially their records, and gratefully accept their help in arriving at facts. Where we cannot have certainty, there are degrees of probability in their narratives, upon which careful and comprehensive inquiry may enable us to bring such collateral evidence to bear as shall determine the measures of their value as legitimate sources of history.

Where the present writer has failed in his endeavour to arrive at the truth, he solicits the kindly indulgence of his readers, who cannot fail to recognise the difficulties which beset many of the subjects dealt with in these Chronicles of Old Pontefract.

The Author's thanks are due—and are here gratefully tendered—to Mr. Oswald Holmes, of Pontefract, for permission to quote from the valuable works of his late father, and also to Mr. John Wilson, of Chorley, for permission to quote from his interesting volume of "Notes and Verses."

L. P.

Chronicles of Old Pontefract.

INTRODUCTORY.

There are those who hold that the Past does not concern us, that we have only to do with the Present—to such this book can have no interest. On the other hand, there are a far greater number of people who do feel an interest in the memorials of the Past, and the landmarks proclaiming the vicissitudes that mark the eras through which our forefathers have passed. To such, antiquarian studies are not useless, since they inspire a reverence for all that is good and grand in chivalry, art, architecture, and social and religious progress,

From the remains of Early and Mediæval times we may learn much of the past history of our country. As we trace the various epochs of British, Saxon and Norman times, we are enabled to appraise the works of yore, and ascertain more definitely our position to-day, and by comparisons find out our points of assimilation, and mark our transitions. What has been done in the past frequently enables us to forecast what may be accomplished in the future, and so we broaden on from "precedent to precedent," as

> "Oft conducted by Historic Truth,
> We tread the long extent of backward Time."

A desire to learn something of the history of any place in which one's lot is cast, is greatly enhanced when dwelling in a district which has been the centre of important historical events. Such a district is this around Pontefract.

Among the local landmarks of the Past, the celebrated Castle of Pontefract stands out as the most prominent.

Rearing its embattled towers amongst scenes fraught with the most stirring national associations ; built on a rock whose rugged surface seemed fully in keeping with the impregnable stronghold that crowned its summit, the Castle of Pontefract soared high above the surrounding country, a fitting abode for the princely seneschals and hereditary high-stewards of England. For nearly six hundred years it was the seat of great political power and social influence, of which the history of its lords is a proof ; and though nearly two hundred and fifty years have passed since the fabric was dismantled, the great pile of ruins still remains as a relic of its past glories.

From whatever point these ruins are approached the effect is strikingly picturesque ; but if "distance lends enchantment to the view," contiguity imparts feelings not altogether allied to poetry, romance and chivalry, for he who has learned something of the great fabric's history experiences sensations which may well hold him spell-bound. He feels that he is standing before a monument of Time in all truth,—a stern reality of Norman greatness, a stupendous memento that, sermon-like, silently proclaims the fickle nature of all human glory, and that races and dynasties have come and gone, having played their part on life's stage.

Nothing further in the way of introduction is needed ; the following pages will, we believe, show how closely the history of Pontefract is interwoven with the general history of England during many centuries of time.

Chronicles of Old Pontefract.

CHAPTER I.

—o—

"'Describe the Borough'—though our idle tribe
May love description, can we so describe,
That you shall fairly streets and buildings trace,
And all that gives distinction to a place?
This cannot be; yet, moved by your request,
A part I paint—let Fancy form the rest."—*Crabbe.*

The ancient town of Pontefract is pleasantly situated on an eminence some two miles south of the River Aire, in the Upper Division of the Wapentake of Osgoldcross, in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

Few places in England are richer in relics and memories of an historical and antiquarian character. The Briton, the Roman, the Saxon, the Dane and the Norman have successively been lord of the soil, and all have left marks of their conquest over the immediate district, either in material traces, or in a nomenclature still less liable to be effaced.

Few towns call up more varied, or more brilliant recollections than are inseparably associated with the name of Pontefract,—associated with the history of the illustrious family of De Lacy,—associated with the fortunes of the house of Plantagenet, which, with so steady a persistence long contested the Crown of England,—associated with a long list of the

bravest and noblest of the land, who, during the fierce Wars of the Roses, staked life and fortune upon the royal house of Lancaster,—associated with the great Civil War, and its steady adherence to the Royalist Party.

Place—Name "Pontefract."

Whence came its Norman nomenclature, and when and where its bridge was broken down, are questions over which topographers and antiquaries have long stumbled, seeing that the River Aire, the only stream of the district needing to be traversed by a bridge of any size, is two miles from the town, and quite out of its girth.

The monkish legend of Thomas de Casterford, a Benedictine monk who flourished in the 14th Century, is the earliest record we find regarding the derivation of the name, and was for some centuries adopted by Polydore Vergil, Leland, Camden and other writers who possessed a sufficient share of credulity to accept the story, which in substance runs as follows:—When William, Archbishop of York, was returning from a pilgrimage to Rome, he was met by such crowds of people, who assembled to crave his blessing, that a wooden bridge in the neighbourhood broke down, and great numbers of people fell into the water. The divine, deeply affected by the accident, poured out his prayers with such fervour and success that not one perished. To perpetuate so striking a miracle, the pious Normans gave the name Pons-fractus (broken bridge) to the town. By other ancient writers, however, the scene of this miraculous transaction is transferred to York, and according to the positive assertion of Stubbs, it was a bridge over the Ouse at York that fell in and endangered the lives of the multitude of people who came to meet their prelate. Drake also observes, in his "Eboracum," that a chapel was built on Ouse Bridge and dedicated to Archbishop Williams in commemoration of the miracle.

The interesting legend recorded by Thomas de Casterford is, so far as it relates to Pontefract, entirely destroyed by the early charters granted to the Pontefract monks by Robert de

Lacy, where we find the town is named as Pontfractus, some fifty-three years before the Archbishop's time. Also Richard of Hexham, whose chronicle extends only to the year 1139; John of Hexham, whose chronicle extends only up to, not later than 1154, and Ordericus Vitalis, whose chronicle reaches only to the year 1141, each speak of the place as "Pons-fractus." A Nostel Charter also, of date between 1121 and 1131 records the same name. Besides, had the miracle occurred on the bridge over the Aire, we should rather have expected Ferrybridge to have taken the name of Pons-fractus than Tateshall or Kyrkebi. As a matter of fact the modern name is found in the above records anterior to the date 1154, in which the miracle is said to have occurred. Some modern topographers have vainly tried to locate the "broken bridge" as being over the River Went, over three miles south of the town, but this theory is scarcely worthy of serious consideration.

Thomas Gent, the York historian (1739), locates the site of the broken bridge at the Bubwith Wash, an insignificant stream lying half a mile east of Pontefract. He says that—

> "Before the Drains were made, this Wash, having been not only supplied from high springs, but heightened by excessive Rains, it must consequently have been here that the said Bridge was made, and came to Decay. By an Inquisition taken in the reign of Edward the II., the doubt seems to be cleared up concerning Pontefract Bridge. The Words proving the same are, "Juxta veterem Pontem de Ponfrette," and by the whole Inquiry it is apparent that the 17th Part of a Knight's Fee was held by John Bubwith nigh the old bridge, and further that the adjacent Houses near which the Wash terminates do yet retain his name, being at this very day called Bubwith Houses."

But the Wash is such a diminutive stream, and from the conformation of the country could never have been any other, that it was impossible for a "great multitude" of people to have had their lives endangered by falling into it. We therefore dismiss the theory of Thomas Gent as untenable.

Hume, the historian, supposes the town to have been named Pontfrete or Pomfreit, from the fertility of its soil, and the excellent produce of its orchards. From "pomum ferre,"

he makes Pomfrete, which is at least a most ingenious supposition, but this orthography cannot be established.

Leland (1534) says it is a French name brought in by the De Lacies, who named the place, from á Pontfrete, in Normandy, their native town, but this purely theoretical derivation is beset with difficulties, for we have no evidence or trace of any such place in Normandy, while it is tolerably certain that Ilbert de Lacy sprang from Lassy, a small place between Aulnay and Vire, in the present Department of La Calvados. Since history and topography are alike silent on this point, we may reasonably consider this theory also as unsatisfactory.

There is yet another theory gravely put forth in Gough's Edition of Camden, that the name Pontefract was given originally to the site of Castleford, and that on the decay of the latter place through the ravages of the Danes, the inhabitants fled to Kirkby, and brought the name of Pontefract with them.

This theory is quite opposed to historical facts. The name Casterford was in use at least two centuries before the name Pontefract occurs. There is also no shred of evidence that any bridge ever existed at or near Castleford in Saxon times. The Roman Ermine Street crossed the River Aire here by a *ford*, and the 12th Century historian Roger de Hoveden states that in 1069 William the Conqueror, on his expedition to chastise the rebellious Northumbrians, was delayed before the *ford* at Casterford for nearly three weeks owing to the swollen state of the river. There is no record of any bridge at Castleford prior to the 13th century.

In Saxon times and during the first twenty years of Norman times, the place now called Pontefract was known as Kyrbebi and so named in one of the earliest Charters of the De Lacies ; during the latter years of the 11th Century the Danish and Norman names were both in use, the former gradually dying out as the latter came into more general use, and during the early part of the 12th Century the earlier name had become quite obsolete.

Alfred S. Ellis, Esq., in an article in "The Yorkshire Archæological and Topographical Journal" (Vol. iv., p. 412) states—

> "Ilbert de Lacy had probably acquired his fief before the Conqueror's detention for three weeks in November, 1069, by the floods in the River Aire, which rendered the passage of the stream impossible at the point where the Roman Watling Street had formerly crossed it by a stone bridge. If the piers of this bridge were still remaining, the check must have been very tantalising to the King, who was in haste to relieve York. He would not, however, allow his engineers to construct a bridge, presumably a wooden one,—for there is no evidence to show that, after the departure of the Romans, anyone could have built a stone bridge,—as he thought such a course inexpedient. It may be inferred, the site of the Castle (at Pontefract) was fixed upon at this time by Ilbert, under the advice of the King and his engineers, for the protection of this important passage of the river, and that it was named from this broken bridge."

We ask,—Where is the evidence that the Romans ever constructed a stone, or even a wooden, bridge at Castleford? We have never met with any, while we have indisputable evidence that the Roman Ermine street crossed the river at Castleford by a *ford*.

After all our investigations we are driven to the conclusion that probably the real origin of the name Pontefract, will be found to have been a Norman importation of the De Lacies, or of the Cluniac Monks from La Charité, who formed a settlement here during the closing years of the 11th Century.

Ancient Notices of Pontefract. Leland.

Leland informs us that King Henry VIII., in the 25th year of his reign (1534), gave a "moste gratius commission" to him, "to peruse and diligently to serche al the Libraries of Monasteries & Colleges of this . . . Reaulme, to the intente that the monnumentes of auncient writers . . . mighte be brought owte of deadely darkness to lyvely lighte," and by virtue of this commission Leland traversed the greater portion of England and Wales. The result of these travels was his celebrated "Itinerary," which was "geven of him as a Newe Yeares Gyfte to King Henry in the xxxvii. yeare of his Raygne."

From this ancient work we extract the following :—

"These be things that I most notid in Pontefract.

"Sum olde People constantely adfirme that the Rigge or Watelyng Streate went through the Parke of Pontfract. As far as I can gether this is the Toune caullid Legeolium. After it was caullid Brokenbridg. Ruines of such a Bridg yet ys seene scant half a mile est owt of olde Pontfract, but I cannot justely say that this Bridg stoode ful on Watelyng Streate.

"Pontfract is a French name brought yn by the Laceys Normans for the English Word of Brokenbridg. Wher as now the fairest Parte of Pontfract stondith on the Toppe of the Hille, was after the Conquest a Chapel with a few sparkelid Houses; the Chapel was caullid S. Leonardes in the Frithe; and as I can lerne this Part of the was caullid Kirkeby.

"Edmunde de Lacy buildid the College of White Freres in this part of Pontfract. Syr Robert Knolles, that was the notable Warrier yn Faunce, buildid in this Part of Pontfract Trinite College, having an Hospital yoinid to. In the College is a Mastre and 6 or 7 Prestes: & yn the Hospital be 13 Poore Men & Wimen. Syr Robert Knelles was ons myndid to have made this college at his manor of Skouthorp 3 miles from Walsingham: but at the Desier of Constance his wife, a Woman of mene birth & sumtyne of a dissolute lyving afore Mariage, he turnid his Purpose, & made it yn the very place of Pontfract, wher his Wife was borne, endowing the college with a 180li land by the yere.

"The Castelle of Pontfract, of sum caullid Snorre Castelle, containith 8 Tourres, of the which the Dungeon cast ynto 6 Roundelles, 3 bigge & 3 smaul, is very fair, & hath a fair Spring. Ther is yn the Dyke by North the Constables Tourre. King William Conquerour gave the Castelle with the Towne of Brokenbridg, & very much Land lying thereabout to Hilbert de Laceio, a Noble Norman, this Hilbert foundid the College of S. Clemente in the Castelle.

"Ther was a College & Hospital in Brokenbridg afore the Conquest, wher the Monkes lay ontil the Prierie was erectid; it is yet an Hospitale. Robert sun to Hilbert Lacy impropriate booth this Hospitale & S. Clementes yn in the Castelle, apon conditions to the new Priorie. Ther is a Dene & a 3 Prebendes yet in S. Clementes in the Castelle. The Hospitale of S. Nicholas of late dayes cam to the Order of the Priorie of S. Oswald.

"The Castelle, Town & Landes about Brokenbridg longgid afore the Conquest to one Richard Aschenald. Richard had Ailrik, & he had Swane, of whom cam Adam: of Adam cam 2 Doughtters, wherof one of them was maried to Galfride Neville, the other to Thomas Burge. But nother of thes 2 had any part of the Quarters of Brokenbridg. Robert sun to Hilbert Lacie foundid, instigante Thurstino the Priori of Pontfract, sending from Monkes ad Fanum Charitatio filiæ Cluni."

Camden. William Camden, in his "Magna Britannia," published late in the 16th Century, states that :—

"During the Saxon Sovereignty this place was styled Chirchebi, and derived its name most probably from the erection of its church, a custom prevalent among the Saxons. The term 'kirk' is at this day applied to churches in Scotland, and the word 'bye,' Saxon term for habitation, being coupled with it, would signify—the town or hamlet adjoining."

Camden informs us, on the authority of the Dodsworth MSS., that—"One Aske," was the first Saxon proprietor of the place, and that it descended in due succession to—

"One Alric, from whome William the Conqueror tooke it; Alric had issue Swayne, who had Adam Fitz-Swayne,who had two daughters, one married to Galfredi Neville, and the other to Thomas Burgo."

Evelyn. Evelyn, in his "Memoirs," records :—

"17 August, 1654. Passed thro' Pontefract, the Castle famous for many sieges, both of late & ancient times, & the death of that unhappy King (Richard II.), murdered in it; was now demolishing by the rebells; it stands on a mount, and makes a goodly shew at a distance. The Queene had an house here, and there are many faire seats neere it."

Gent. Thomas Gent, of York, in his "Compendious History," published in 1739, states :—

"Different opinions are about the name of this antient Town (Pontefract), which is said :—1. To have arisen from the Ruins of Legeolium; (2) from the Normans; (3) on occasion of a Miracle; but the Learned supposed it was styled Pontefract above half a century before that extraordinary Event happened, by the Decay of an old Bridge, which had been over an aqueous Place for the want of which it was often impassable to Travellers, 'till such time as proper Channels were made for the Use of two Mills. Before the Conquest, we find that Aske was the first Saxon Proprietor of the Towne; and by due succession it devolv'd to Alric, the last Governour therein of that Race. It is disputable if this Nobleman was not the first Builder of the Castle; whoever it was, the Honour is mostly ascrib'd to Hilbert de Lacy, a Norman."

It is difficult to reconcile some of the above accounts of the Saxon proprietors with the silence of Domesday Book, where the Manor is distinctly stated to have belonged to the King in the time of Edward the Confessor, without any Saxon proprietor

being mentioned. The King might indeed have granted his right in the burgh, or what is now called fee-farm rent, to the above family of Aske, which they might have continued to enjoy without obtaining it as a freehold inheritance. In this case, though they would be considered as lords of Kirkby in a popular sense, yet they would not be noticed in the Domesday Record, as not being *proprietors*, that is, assuming that Kyrkby, though not mentioned by name in the Domesday Survey, was included in the Royal Manor of Tateshalle (Tanshelf).

CHAPTER II.

—o—

"Far to the North, where bold Brigantian Kings
Rul'd awful, ere the martial clime was hail'd
By the lov'd name of York."—*Anon.*

Ancient British Times.

Antecedent to the Christian era, during the long period which historians designate "The Times of the Ancient Britons," this district of South Yorkshire lay in the heart of a vast forest, which covered all the northern portion of England.

In those remote times the whole of the Pontefract district was included in the Country of the Brigantes, the most numerous and most powerful of all the Celtic tribes that possessed the island at the time of the invasion of the Romans (*see Tacitus*).

Isurium Brigantium, now the little hamlet of Aldborough, near Boroughbridge, was their metropolis, and the extent of country dominated by this hardy and courageous race included what now practically comprises the Counties of Yorkshire, Durham, Lancashire, Westmoreland and Cumberland.

Of these early Britons, the material traces of their connection with this immediate district of which we are treating are slight indeed, notwithstanding the existence of the reputed British earthworks at Pontefract, Kirk Smeaton, Kippax and Glass Houghton, as well as certain sepulchral mounds, or, as they are called under various circumstances, Tumuli, Barrows or Cairns, the oldest of our existing

antiquities, dating far back in the Pre-historic Age, some of which have been opened and explored in the neighbourhood of Ferrybridge.

At a time when antiquarian research is attracting increased attention, an attempt to elucidate the ancient history of a locality like that of Pontefract cannot but prove a subject of interest. The few traces here recorded are not numerous; but, as shedding light on an almost unexplored epoch of our history, will, it is hoped, be found to prove an addition to our local annals; and if the evidences here recorded suffice to show that this district around Pontefract was occupied previous to the time of the Saxons by the Romans, and before them by the Britons, the evidence must be regarded as opening out to us an interesting page of local history, the further investigation of which will doubtless, from time to time, be rewarded by new discoveries.

With respect to the foundation of the Norman Castle at Pontefract, Holinshed (temp. Henry VIII.) affirms that "an earthern fortification existed here anterior to the Conquest," and a proof of that assertion appeared during the demolition of the Castle in 1649, when it was discovered that the keep stood upon an ancient artificial mound of earthworks, which, according to high authorities, was deemed to be the remains of a Brigantian camp, formed probably long before Roman times. It was perhaps this earthern fortification which made Tateshalle (Tanshelf) so considerable a place in Pre-Norman times. It is worthy of notice that a similar mound (also the basis of a keep) was the necleus of each of the Castles of Coningsborough and Tickhill.

Besides this fragment of British Pontefract, a flint arrow head, dug up near the Castle grounds, was, in August, 1870, exhibited before the Yorkshire Archæological Association, and by experts in British antiquities averred to have been the manufacture of an ancient Briton. We are not in a position to state whether Pontefract has furnished any positive evidence beyond these here mentioned, connecting it with pre-historic times, but within little more than a mile north of the town

there was a good specimen of an Ancient British burial-mound, which was long an object of interest to antiquaries; the ground, however, has, within the last fifty years, been levelled and ploughed over, until its exact site has almost been obliterated.

Ancient Burial Mound.

The following is an account of the opening of this Sepulchral Tumulus, which was situated in Roundhill Field, to the left of the road leading from Ferrybridge to Castleford.

Some attempt had been made to remove this mound in the year 1811 by Mr. Hall, the then occupant of the field, when many human bones were met with, but after removing a considerable portion, the design was abandoned.

"A serious attempt to examine the Tumulus was made in March, 1863. With the object of ascertaining its structure, a trench was first dug on the side not previously disturbed, to within a few feet of the centre, when it was ascertained that the material used in its structure gradually changed from sandy gravel to large stones as the middle was approached, and that it had evidently been raised upon a natural swell of the strata, thus offering a dry situation, a condition about which the ancients appear to have been solicitous in choosing the sites of their sepulchral mounds.

"The excavators then began at the top, and at a depth of a few feet came across two human skeletons, one upon the other. Near them lay portions of two antlers of the red deer, several detached pieces of what appeared to have been the tusk of some animal such as the wild boar, and fragments of half-baked pottery, which on comparison were found to be portions of two urns of the early British type. About eighteen inches to the left of these lay the skeleton of another person, who had evidently lived to a great age, as the teeth were very much worn, though showing no signs of decay.

"Digging downwards, a large rough slab was reached at the depth of four feet from the surface. Its removal disclosed a stone cist or grave, of which it had formed the cover, composed of four rough stones on edge, and paved with smaller pieces at the bottom. In this cist was the skeleton of an adult, apparently of large stature, the thigh bones measuring in length 19¾ inches, the leg 16 inches. The skull was well developed, and the teeth in beautiful preservation. On the breast was an urn, laid on its side, of very coarse make, imperfectly baked, and so fragile that on the careful attempt to remove it the urn crumbled into fragments. Near it was a small chipping of flint with a cutting edge, 2½ inches in length; this was the only article having any resemblance to a tool or implement hitherto met with.

"Proceeding downward, were many large stones, while the

surrounding gravel was mixed with fragments of human bones, small pieces of urns and bits of charcoal.

"At about the depth of seven feet was a flat stone, laid horizontally, 4½ feet by 3 feet. Under this was a layer of dark earth, 3 inches thick, totally different from that surrounding it, in which was perceptible no trace of animal remains.

"At the depth of nine feet the bed rock was reached, in which was a cavity about 10 inches deep, filled with gravel mixed with bones.

"From observations then made, it was concluded that the mound had been used for burials anterior to the formation of the cist, on which occasion its upper part was levelled to make a convenient platform for it, when the bones of former interments were disturbed and scattered about. The fact of the three skeletons first noticed being interred after the Christian mode, is presumptive evidence that they were Saxon. It is well ascertained that this people frequently buried in British tumuli, until an edict, published in 987, prohibited this practice, and provided that no one should be buried in the tumuli of the Pagans, but only in the ground attached to the Churches.

"In 1871 a final investigation of this tumulus was made under the direct supervision of the Rev. Canon Greenwell and the late Lord Houghton.

"The result of this last 'scientific examination' showed that the former riflings had not robbed it of all its sepulchral treasure.

"On this occasion the digging commenced on the eastern side, where a deposit of burnt bones was found upon a flat stone just below the surface, and ten feet from the outside.

"Six feet to the north was another deposit. Five feet south of the centre was an unburnt skeleton, doubled up, and on its right side, with its head to the south. Immediately beneath, and in close contact with it, was a burnt skeleton, apparently deposited at the same time. These interments in opposite customs present very interesting features in British sepulchral usage, as if the practice of cremation were not universal, but influenced by the wish of the deceased, or the inclination of surviving friends. With these remains was found an urn 4½ inches in height, and rudely ornamented. As the work proceeded, the large flat stone covering the deposit of dark earth was again met with.

"At a depth of seven feet the natural bed of limestone rock was bared, and upon it dark deposits were found. Their origin and purpose offer an interesting subject of inquiry, and are suggestive of their sacrificial character, or their connection with some of the Druidical rites of the Ancient Britains. On this bed rock, in the centre of the tumulus, was found a large circular hole, six feet in diameter, and two feet six inches deep, filled with gravel and calcined bones. At the west end was a rudely-formed cist, in which was found

a skeleton, bent up in the usual manner. At its feet lay a drinking cup, height 7 inches, ornamented with three sets of ornamental lines, filled up between with vertical lines.

"In the hollow of the knees was found a bronzed pin, much oxydized, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. This might have been used to fasten some portion of the dress in which the person had been buried."

Various theories have from time to time been put forth to account for the singular fact that numerous groups of British remains have been so frequently discovered, buried in the way described in this instance, and furnished with specimens of the handicraft of the Britons, exhibiting no mean skill in the art of manufacture. This may be taken as a proof that those early races were not quite the rude barbarians which it has been too commonly the custom to represent them.

CHAPTER III.

—o—

"Rome, for empire far renown'd,
Tramples on a thousand states."—*Cowper.*

The Roman Conquest.

The Romans who first invaded Britain in 55 B.C., did not subdue the Northern British tribes and bring them under the Imperial domination, until about 79 A.D. Of the desperate resistance and indomitable bravery of the Brigantes, in their contests with the Roman legions during more than a century, many interesting accounts are given by Roman historians.

In the reign of Domitian it is recorded how they withstood the Pro-prætor Ostorius. In the dirge chanted at the obsequies of the Emperor Claudius, "the azure-armed Brigantes" are deemed worthy of special mention, and Tacitus has left on record the military glory which accrued to Petilius Cerealis in subduing these valiant barbarians, and also the final establishment of the Imperial authority over them by the policy of Agricola.

When the country of the Brigantes was at length conquered, it was formed into the Roman Province of Maxima Cæsariensi, with its principal station at Eboracum (York) from

which central point the cohorts, dispersed in every direction, retained the surrounding country in obedience.

The Roman Period.

The Romans, having subdued the Britons, inaugurated a thoroughly new state of things. In order to secure the country they had conquered, and to stifle and crush all attempts at rebellion, they proceeded to establish camps for their garrisons; and to provide facilities for military communication they constructed great military roads by the forced labour of the native races. Tacitus states in his history that the Britons complained that the Romans "put their hands and bodies to the drudgery of clearing woods and paving fens, accompanying their blows with insults."

It appears perfectly clear that, whatever the *superstructure* may have been, the *foundations* of Roman power in Britain were laid in tyranny, and more than one generation was subjected to irksome slavery before despotism had completed what the love of conquest had begun. When the country was finally subdued, it is certain that the Romans fostered the cultivation of its natural resources. They also set up a practical system of law, and administered justice with impartiality. But in the wars which followed the withdrawal of the Roman legions, their laws, institutions, customs, and even their language perished; nothing was left to show that the Romans had ever been in this country except their magnificent roads, the ruins of some of their towns, coins, urns, querns, and other relics, unearthed from time to time, and a few words which have kept their place in the English language we speak to-day. Hence the Roman Period had but little permanent effect on the subsequent history of England; its chief importance may be said to lie on its topographical side.

Roman Roads.

At the place now known as Castleford the Romans established one of their camps, named by Antonine, "Legiolium." The site of this Roman stronghold is sufficiently located by the distance recorded, and by being interposed between Danum (Doncaster)

and Calcaria (Tadcaster), and by the common circumstance of being placed at the confluence of the two considerable rivers, the Aire and Calder.

Through Legiolium ran an important military road, the Ermine Street,* which has been closely traced from Doncaster, through Barnsdale, East Hardwick, down what now forms the western boundary of Pontefract Park, over Roundhill, along Beancroft Road, Welbeck Street and Rectory Street, by Castleford Parish Church, across the river by a ford, and thence forward to Tadcaster and York.

A second Roman Road from Chesterfield, by way of Sheffield and Ackworth, joined Ermine Street at Pontefract, as did also a third from Chester, by way of Wakefield and Streethouses. As late as 1859 as many as 500 coins, of the Age of Constantine, were dug up on the site of this road near Tanshelf.

Yet another Roman Road passed through Campsall, Darrington and Pontefract, over Red Hill, and joining Ermine Street near the ford at Castleford. At numerous places in this neighbourhood remains and traces of these roads have been cut through in modern times, especially during draining operations at Castleford. The paved road was cut through by the Aire and Calder Navigation Company in 1826, when it was noticed that the road shelved down towards the ford crossing the river Aire. From the circumstance of so many roads converging at or near Pontefract, all topographers of any claim to eminence concur in fixing the site of Legiolium at Castleford.

Other evidences that here was an important Roman colony are seen in the great number of Roman Remains which have been unearthed from time to time. In the Leeds Philosophical Hall may be seen a good specimen of a Roman

* Many topographers and cartographers, from Leland downwards, persist in naming this road, the Watling Street, but it is perfectly clear that this is an error. The Watling Street ran from London to Chester, then onward through Manchester, by Ilkley, to the North. The trunk line of Ermine Street ran from London to Lincoln, from whence one of its branches passed through Doncaster and Castleford, joining the Watling Street near Aldborough.

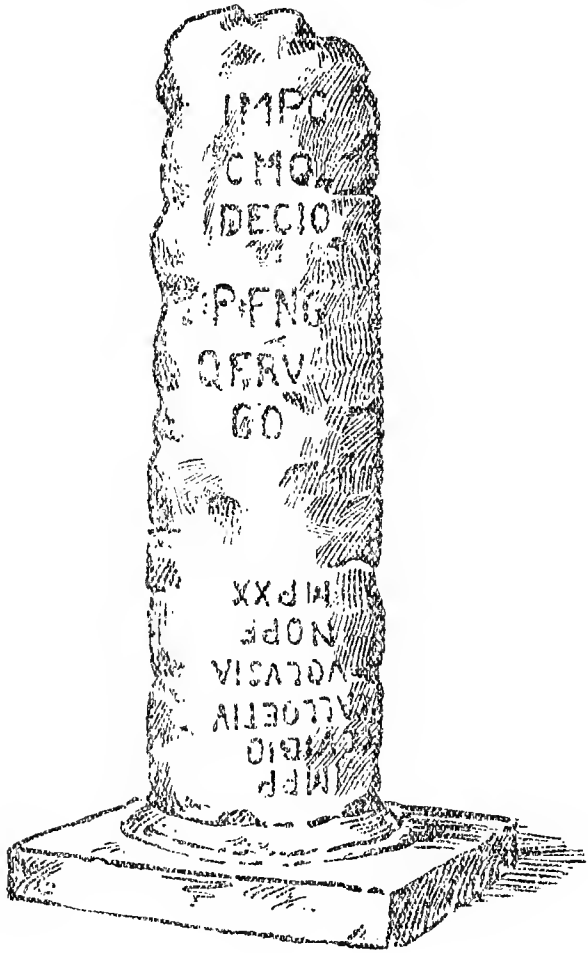
altar, dug up at Castleford in 1826, during the construction of the Aire and Calder Canal.

The name Brigant is found inscribed on many such altars which have been discovered in various parts of Yorkshire, and it would appear from this fact that the Romans incorporated into their mythology the gods of the Ancient Britons, for Brigantia was one of the tutelar deities of these northern Celtic tribes.

Another interesting relic recently removed from Castleford to the Leeds Philosophical Hall is a Roman milestone, dug up in Beancroft Road, which exactly overlies a part of the Ermine Street at Castleford. There are two inscriptions, as may be seen from our illustration. When first erected in the reign of the Emperor Decius Trajanus (249 A.D.), it was inscribed with his and his son's names and titles. After his death the stone was inverted, and re-inscribed with the names and titles of his

successors and conjoint Emperors, Vibius Gallus, and Vibius Volusianus (251-253 A.D.) The inscriptions, which are abbreviated, appear to be as follows :—

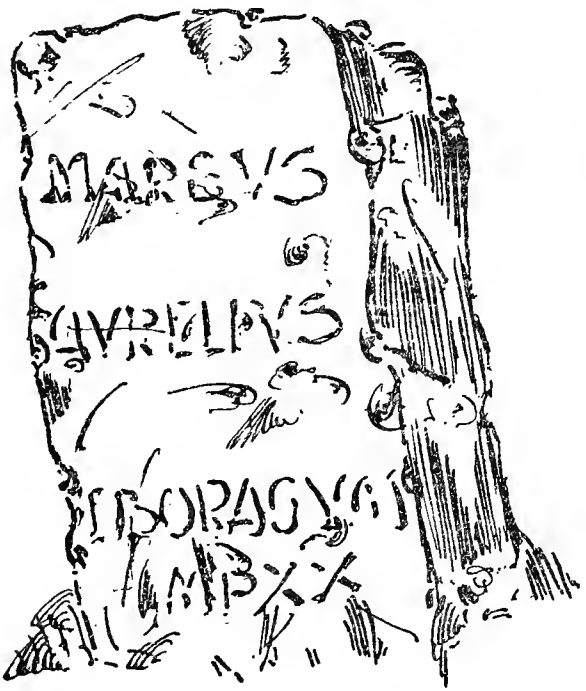
(a)	*(b)*
IMPC	IMPP
CMQ	CCVIBIO
DECIO	GALLOETIV
PFVG	VOLVSIA
QFRV	NOPE
CO	MPXX



which has been deciphered as :—

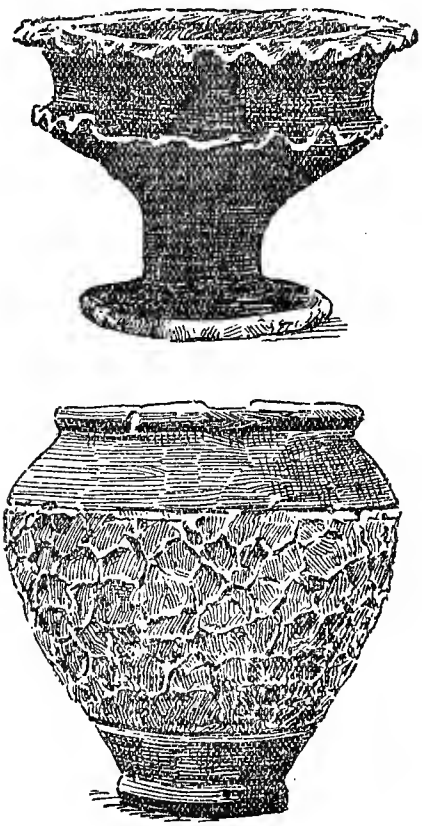
(a) Imperatore	*(b)* Imperatoribus
Cæsare Messio Quinto	Cæsarilus C Vibio Gallo
Decio	et C Vibro Volusiaus püs
pio felici Augusto et C	felicibus Augustus Eburaco
Messio	Milli passuum X X
Quinto Etrusco	

Another Roman milestone, inscribed to Marcus Aurelius, may now be seen at St. Catherine's, the Pontefract residence of Robert D. Ryder, Esq., J.P. It was discovered when digging a drain in Carlton Street, Castleford, and presented to Mr. Ryder by the late Dr. Jessop, J.P. The indication of distance to Eboracum (York) is worthy of note.



Querns, Roman pottery, urns, fragments of Roman lamps, tesselated pavement, and coins bearing effigies of

various Roman Emperors, all found in the immediate district, are now in the possession of different local authorities and private individuals in and around Pontefract. We give two illustrations of Roman Burial Urns which were dug up near Beancroft Road, Castleford, a few years ago, both of which contain charred human bones.



Those numerous relics of Roman times prove that the district of which we are treating was an important Roman military centre, and we may fairly assume that many a Roman legion, under such military commanders as Suetonius Paulinus,

Agricola, Hadrian and Severus, have passed and re-passed along the great Ermine Street, which skirted the eastern borders of the present site of Pontefract. When the Park Hill was cut through in 1874, in order to form a reservoir for the Town's water, fragments of Roman pottery dug up evidenced that the Roman legions must have used this place as a camping ground. This mass of sherds of Roman pottery are clearly the accumulated débris of a camp. Some of these specimens were exhibited before the members of the Royal Antiquarian Society by the late R. N. Philips, Esq., Recorder of Pontefract, and created much interest amongst that body of expert antiquaries.

Roman remains have quite recently been unearthed near St. Ive's Well, at Spital Hardwick ; indeed, the traces of the Romans are so numerous in Pontefract and its immediate vicinity, as to leave no room for doubt that it was the scene of their operations to the latest period of their possession of Britain, for coins of the earliest Emperors, down to Honorius, in whose reign the Roman Government of Britain was formally abandoned, have been found here. These coins alone, extending from the earlier times of Claudius and Domitian, down to those of Eugenius and Honorius, afford clear proof of locality and conquest. Neither must it be forgotten that every Roman coin is in itself a little record, be it what it may, of historic bygone times. "Every fresh coin was, no doubt, a kind of Gazette, that published the latest news of the Empire, and made the virtues and actions of the Emperior circulate"—(*vide Shortt's "Sylvia Antiqua"*).

CHAPTER IV.

"Old legends of the monkish page,
Traditions of the saint and sage,
Tales that have the rime of age,
And chronicles of eld. *Longfellow.*

The Saxon Period.

About the year 410, the Roman garrisons were withdrawn from Britain and other distant provinces, to defend Italy, the heart of the vast Roman Empire, from the incursions of the Huns and Goths.

But little is recorded of the internal condition of Britain between the departure of the Romans and the arrival of the Angles in force some thirty years later; but, whatever may have been the effect of Roman dominion, or the infusion of Roman blood, upon the social character of the Britons, it is at least certain that they had made little progress in the art of self-defence, so that when the Roman administration was gone there was nothing to take its place. Denuded of troops, Britain was an easy prey to her foes. The Picts and Scots invaded and ravaged these northern regions, while closely following their incursion came the Angles and Saxons on the southern and eastern coasts, who slowly but surely established themselves in the country.

The Kingdom of Elmet.

Geoffrey of Monmouth and other chroniclers refer to the district we are specially treating of, as having been the battle-ground of rival races during nearly two centuries following the withdrawal of the Romans. The country around Ponte-

fract was during this period included in the Celtic Kingdom of Elmet, a kingdom embracing an extent of territory whose boundaries modern topographers have made many conflicting attempts to define.

Gwynedd.

When the Angles first appeared on the eastern coasts of Yorkshire between 480 and 520, the kingdom of Elmet formed part of the extensive kingdom of Gwynedd, of which the capital was Chester. From the Gwent (River Derwent) of Deira as their base, the Angles over-ran the country between the Humber and the Tyne, dispossessed the Britons, slaying many of them, and drove the rest westward into the woods and moors of Yorkshire, but the denseness of the Forest of Elmet long barred their advance.

The old kingdom of Elmet is sometimes described as embracing only what now practically forms the West Riding of Yorkshire, but there is no doubt whatever that it originally embraced a much larger extent of territory. Northward it was connected with Cumbria and Strathclyde, and southward and westward with Gwynedd—that is, there was uninterrupted intercourse between the Britons of these various places.

A change came with the overwhelming victory of Ethelfrith over the combined forces of the Scots of Dalriada and the Britons of Strathclyde in 603 A.D.—a victory so decided that Bede says the Scots and Britons of the north never attempted again to invade Northumbria. One effect of this victory was to sever the connection between the Britons of Elmet and the Britons of Cumbria and Strathclyde, and so to limit the area of the kingdom of Elmet northwards.

Another change came with Ethelfrith's second overwhelming victory over the Britons of Gwynedd in the neighbourhood of Chester. This battle, according to the Anglo-Saxon chronicle, was fought in 607. Bede gives an account of this battle, but does not mention the date. One effect of the victory at Chester was to sever the connection between the Britons of Elmet and the Britons of Gwynedd—that is, to

cut off the little kingdom of Elmet from the larger kingdom of which it at one time formed a part. Then for about a quarter of a century this circumscribed Celtic kingdom, practically within the limits of the West Riding of Yorkshire, to quote the words of the Venerable Bede, "stood like a Christian oasis, surrounded by the desert of Saxon paganism."

The ancient earthwork fortifications at Barwick-in-Elmet, Kippax and other places in the neighbourhood, are thought by many eminent antiquaries to have been constructed during this period. This hypothesis, however, is of a controversial character, into which we do not propose to enter, as it scarcely comes within the scope of this work.

The Kingdom of Northumbria.

Edwine, king of Northumbria, completed the conquest of Elmet about 627, the Angles began to settle in it, and as an independent British realm it passed away, being absorbed into the powerful kingdom of Northumbria. The district around Pontefract thus became annexed to this, the most extensive of the kingdoms forming the Saxon Heptarchy.

The heathen Saxons had almost exterminated the Christian faith in Britain, but in the reign of Ethelbert, king of Kentia about 597, Augustine and his forty monks landed and commenced their missionary labours. Ethelbert himself was one of the early converts. Edwine, king of Northumbria, afterwards married Ethelburga, daughter of Ethelbert, who brought with her to the Northumbrian court her own priest Paulinus, through whose teaching Edwine and his Witan publicly embraced the Christian faith and were baptized. Then followed the invasions of Penda, the pagan king of Mercia, and the defeat and death of Edwine at the battle of Hatfield, near Thorne, in 633, as recorded by John of Bromton in the Saxon chronicle.

King Oswald.

Oswic and Eanfrid, his immediate successors, each in turn died fighting against the Mercian king; Eanfrid was succeeded by Oswald, who on the testimony of Bede was "an ardent Christian," whose

reign of twenty years was spent in withstanding the inroads of Penda, and in propagating the Christian faith among his own subjects. His fame on the battle-field was only eclipsed by his piety and missionary zeal. He was eventually slain in battle about 655. On account of his virtues he was canonized, and his name is still preserved in the dedication of many old churches in Yorkshire. The most ancient relic at Methley Parish Church is a small monument to this royal saint; the ancient Priory at Nostell takes its name from him, and formerly there stood in Pontefract Market Place a huge stone cross dedicated to his memory. The Wapentake derives the distinctive parts of its title from this circumstance, and hence we get the name Oswaldcross, in Domesday Book Osgitcross, and now corrupted into Osgoldcross.

There is a local tradition that formerly no one could be arrested at Oswald's Cross in Pontefract, and a free way leading to it, with about two yards' width of land round the cross, was long kept unpaved in memory of that ancient privilege. In the year 1735 the old cross was pulled down, and a market-cross erected on the site, the cost being defrayed by a legacy left by one Dupier, an inhabitant of the town. (An illustration of this handsome structure, with its colonnade of Doric pillars is given in Gent's "Dissertion of Pontefract, 1739."

In this connection we venture to digress somewhat, and offer the following observations as to the origin of the word "Wapentake." In the time of King Alfred the people were classed into families of tens, over which one man, called the *tytheing-man*, was elected, whose duty it was to maintain peace and the laws common for their association. Ten tytheings constituted a higher court, called the Hundred Court. A number of these Hundreds formed a Riding. Having in Alfred's time no standing armies, the Courts required all youths of fourteen years to be brought to do suit and service, i.e., to be sworn to uphold the laws, and to take share in the defence of the Riding. These districts were called "Wapentaks," because these youths took their weapon when called

upon and touched the weapon of their leader. The 12th century historian, Hovedon, says that—

> "When a person received the government of one of these divisions, at the appointed time and place, the elder sort met him, and when he had alighted from his horse, arose up to him; then he held up his spear and took security of all present, according to custom; whoever came, touched his weapon with their weapon, and by this touch was confirmed in one common interest, and thus from 'Wæpon' (weapon) and 'tac' (touch) we derive the term 'Wapentake.' Musters were formerly taken of the armour and weapons of the several inhabitants of every Wapentake, and from such as could not find sufficient pledges of their good a-bearing, their weapons were taken from them."

We think it more than probable that the Wapentake, or Inspection of Arms for this district, was held on the site of Oswald's Cross in Pontefract. We have no direct proof to furnish, and merely give our opinion for what it is worth. Oswy, the brother and successor of King Oswald, finally inflicted an overwhelming defeat upon the Mercians at "Winwaedfeld" (Winmoor, in the parish of Barwick-in-Elmet), where Penda was slain. According to the testimony of Bede, who was born within twenty years of this event, "the battle of Winwaedfeld was equally advantageous to both kingdoms, for the Conqueror delivered his own people from the ravages of the pagans, and led to the conversion of the Mercians themselves to the Christian faith."

It is evident that the country lying between Doncaster and Ripon is closely associated with the memory of each of the three great Northumbrian kings, Edwine, Oswald and Oswy. We find an interesting notice in Bede of the "Monasterium in Sylvâ Elmeti," which some topographers locate as a religious foundation at Nostell, dedicated to St. Oswald, prior to the one founded there by the De Lacies in early Norman Times. We are thus led to infer that the district around Pontefract is in some special manner connected with the name and fame of Saint Oswald.

The Invasion of the Danes.

We pass on to one hundred and fifty years later, when the Northmen began to infest the coasts of Northumbria, sailed up the Ouse, and spread westward into this district. During their ravages the condition of Northumbria must have been

deplorable. The whole district was a scene of confusion and carnage, churches were ruthlessly destroyed, villages sacked and burnt, and the land largely occupied by these new invaders. The etymology of such place-names as Knottingley, South Kirkby, Whitwood, Whitkirk and Thorpe Audlin, indicate that the Danes made permanent settlements in this district during these later Saxon Times. Pontefract itself, as its ancient name of Kirkby indicates, would appear to have been a Danish settlement. The original plan of the town, as the late Mr. Holmes has so clearly demonstrated, is of a type common to many towns of Danish origin, which seem to have been planned for strategical purposes by an organized body of military invaders. The nucleus of a typical Danish town consisted of a main street leading to a wide open area, otherwise entered at the corners alone, both area and main street being flanked by one or more concentric streets, having in each case an angular twist in the direction away from the point to be stategically defended. Such are the general plans of Knaresborough, Thirsk and Wakefield, all Danish towns in this kingdom of Northumbria. The main street at Pontefract was Micklegate, the Great Street—for in these Danish towns a "gate" is a street. This Micklegate was flanked to the north by Northgate, to the south by Southgate, and the open area was entered at the four corners by streets which may still be traced in Gillygate, Ropergate, Tanshelf Street, and the Woolmarket.

Of local traces during the six centuries comprising the Saxon Period, there are very few, except what may be gathered from the place-names around Pontefract, and here we may observe that place-names are in no case mere arbitrary sounds devoid of meaning ; they are almost always ancient words, or fragments of ancient words, each of them, in short, constituting the earliest chapter in the local history of the places to which they refer.

Further evidences of this Period may be found in the herring-bone masonry of such churches as Burg-Wallis and Kippax, though we are aware that herring-bone architecture is

not always reliable evidence of date, as it is found in various classes of masonry from Roman to well on into Norman Times.

In an interesting article contributed to the Yorkshire Archæological Journal in 1875, on "Yorkshire Mints under the Danish Kings," reference is made to a Danish coin issued during the reign of Sitric, son of Guthfrith, one of the vassal kings of Northumbria under Athelstan. This coin bears on the reverse the inscription "SITRIC REX" in two lines, and between them a sword, the symbol of St. Peter, and on the obverse "CASTDA-EORT" round a cross with pellets and crescents. Eminent authorities regard this inscription as referring to the Casterford of the Saxon Chronicles, Castleford of to-day. The final T for D has its parallels in Racnolt and Raienalt in the coins of Regnald, another Danish king of Northumbria, and in the names of some of the Saxon Eadmund's coins.

Ancient Tanshelf.

It was not until the year 625, two centuries after the departure of the Romans, that the place now called Tanshelf comes within the ken of recorded history, under the name of Taddenescylf. In that year Ethelburga (or Tada, a modification of her name), when she became the wife of King Edwine of Northumbria, received this manor as part of her dowry; the place was named after her, and appears in the Saxon Chronicle as Taddenescylf, and later as Tateshale.

We have failed to find any other reference to the manor during the following three centuries. In 947, when it again comes into historic view, it must have been of some importance, since here it was that Edred, who had been crowned at Kingston-upon-Thames by Archbishop Odo in 946, came in the course of the following year, in order to be acknowledged king by the Northern Witan. Taddenescylf was then a royal borough, and at the Conquest, one hundred and twenty years later, it was still a demesne of the Crown under the name of Tateshalle.

Battle at Castleford.

The treaty signed at Tanshelf appears to have been soon broken by the Northumbrians, with the result that Edred marched an army to the north to punish them for their "breach of leagues." The record of Roger de Hovedon states that "King Edred's army at Caisterford suffered a signal defeat in 948 A.D., the Danes from York under Eric overcoming him in battle, and slaying large numbers of his followers."

The late Mr. Holmes has been able to corroborate Hovedon's account from various sources, e.g., Simeon of Durham, writing about two centuries after the event, states that

> "King Edred came northward in 947, as is mentioned in the Saxon Chronicle, to be acknowledged by the Northumbrian Witan. In the following year the Northumbrians revolted; Edred then marched north and burnt Ripon, which had been held against him, and, as he was returning south, the Northumbrians burst out from York, and committed great slaughter upon him at *Catesford*."

According to the Saxon Chronicle, King Eadmund was murdered on St. Augustine's mass-day, 26 May, 946; Edred his successor came to "Taddens Scylf" the following year, and received the fealty of Wulstan the Archbishop and of the Northumbrian Witan, but "within a little space they belied it all, both pledges and also oaths," so that in 948 Edred, "harried over Northumbria, and burnt Ripon. On his return southward, the army from York overtook his rear at *Chesterford*, and made great slaughter."

The Chronicle of Florence of Worcester is even more definite in fixing the date of this battle. He says that Edred, the new king, was crowned at Kingston by Odo, on Sunday the 7th Kalends of September, and that the date of the murder of his predecessor was Tuesday, 7th of the Kalends of June. He, however, allows three years to elapse before the visit of the king to "Taddenscylf," which brings the date of the battle to 950. He calls the place of the battle *Casterford*.

John of Wallingford gives the following version, in which

the site of the battle is not named, though minutely described ; he says :—

> "When he was about to return to South Anglia, fearing that the enemy might lay in ambush for him, he appointed a rear-guard for the protection of his army, but almost all the men composing it were cut off by the Northumbrians, who had lain in wait for it in a *pass*, where much damage might easily be inflicted."

This *pass* was evidently the ford of the Aire at Caist—Castra —Chester—Cates—Caster-ford, according to the various spellings in the old chronicles, and Castleford according to the moderns.

This battle of Castleford is of great importance, as it marks an epoch of our national history. It was the last struggle of which we have any record, between the Northern Danes and the Saxons, prior to Northumbria ceasing to be a separate kingdom, and becoming merely an earldom, to be soon finally merged in the kingdoms of the Angles.

CHAPTER V.

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" . . . . . the roll
Of names once famed, now dubious or forgot,
And buried midst the wreck of things that were."

We find no local records of the last eighty years of Saxon dominion, except what may be gathered from the Domesday Book, which has preserved for us the names of the Saxon thanes who owned the various manors, with the amount of royal revenue which each contributed at a former Survey made during the last year of the reign of Edward the Confessor (1065).

Norman Times. The Norman invasion of 1066 resulted in the Conquest of England, and the division of the land among the great Norman Barons.

William's chief object, having conquered, was to secure his conquest, and his first care on obtaining possession of each division of the kingdom was to regard it from a military point of view, and to order the construction of such strong places as might be necessary for the holding of it. The land was thus divided, and distributed among the Barons on certain specified conditions. They were held responsible for the orderly governance of their fee, and bound themselves to furnish the King with a number of armed men, proportionate to the size of their estates, in time of war and civil commotion.

An extensive tract of country, extending across the West Riding from the borders of Lincolnshire to Lancashire, was thus granted by the King to one of his Barons, named Ilbert

de Lacy, who selected a site at the place known as Pontefract, as pre-eminently suitable for the erection of his baronial Castle and seat of his power.

The Northumbrian Rebellion.

After so great an agitation and social upheaval as that produced by the advent of the Normans, some years elapsed before the country could be restored to harmony. The inhabitants of the once powerful Kingdom of Northumbria, still cherishing their wonted spirit of independence, were among the last to submit to the Norman yoke.

While William was absent in Normandy, in 1068, the Northumbrians rose in rebellion under Edwin Morcar, expelled the Norman garrison from York, and slew the governor and many of his retainers. William determined to exact a terrible revenge. During the latter half of the year 1069 the King made his second invasion of the North. His army advanced into Yorkshire along the old Roman road, which led them through Doncaster and Pontefract. At Castleford they were detained for three weeks on account of the swollen waters of the River Aire ; at length, however, William crossed the ford at the head of a portion of his army, and was immediately charged by the Saxons, but the Normans stoutly held their ground against the assault, and the following day the whole army crossed without further difficulty or delay. Among the invaders is found the presence of the first Norman Lord of Pontefract, Ilbert de Lacy, and to him was confided the task of subduing the western portions of the rebellious country, and well did he and the mail-clad adventurers whom he led achieve the task. In the wild districts of the West Riding, he disputed at the sword's point with broken and scattered, but indomitable, Northumbrians, and was the fortunate soldier who hurled to the dust all their hopes of the restoration of their nationality.*

The immediate district around Pontefract escaped the violence of William's avenging army, as evidenced from the

* See Thierry's "History of the Norman Conquest."

entries in Domesday Book, but a large portion of Yorkshire is described in that record as "depopulated" and "waste," a clear proof of the merciless way in which the rebellion had been suppressed.

Domesday Book.

The Domesday Book dates its origin from the year 1085, when at the Midsummer Witanagemôt, held at Gloucester, William the Conqueror is reported to have had "mickle thought and sooth deep speech with his Witan about his land, how it were set, and with whilk men." The result of that famous speech is set forth at length by the Chronicler. Commissioners were sent into every shire, whose duty it was to inquire by the oaths of the chief men of the respective Hundreds, the particular specification of the various manors, lands, and rights of each tenant *in capite*; how much land was arable, pasture or forest; what fisheries and mills there were; the name of the possessor in King Edward's time, what it was worth then, what it is worth now, the name of the demesne lord, the name of the grantee's feoffee if subinfeudated, and every fact that could assist the immediate object of the Survey.

The Commissioners completed their work in a single year, and the result was the invaluable record known as "Domesday Book."

From this Record we obtain the condition of the various manors of Ilbert de Lacy, in the immediate vicinity of Pontefract, as follows:—

Tanshelf.

"In Tateshall there are 16 carucates of land, without geld, where 9 ploughs may be. The King had this manor, now Ilbert has 4 ploughs there, and 60 small burgesses, and 16 cottars, and 16 villanes, and 8 bordars having 18 ploughs. A church is there and a priest, one fishery and 3 mills, rendering 42s., and 3 acres of meadow. Wood pasturable one leuga in length, and half a leuga in breadth. The whole manor one leuga and a half in length, and half a leuga in breadth. Was worth 400s., now 300s. Within this limit is contained the alms-lands of the poor."

With regard to the value recorded, it is necessary to remember that the above sum, though small at the present day, was something considerable eight centuries ago. The pound sterling at the time was a pound weight in troy of silver, and

its intrinsic value when in money was £3, but its extrinsic value was about 100 times more than £1 of the present day. The annual value, then, of Tanshelf in King Edward's time would be about £2,000, and in the Conqueror's time £1,500 of our money, and would be considered a valuable possession at that period. It will be observed that the Castle of Ilbert de Lacy, who held the Honor of Pontefract, is not mentioned in the Survey.*

Kippax. "In Chipesch and Ledstune, Earl Edwin had 18 carucates for geld, and 10 ploughs may be there. To this manor belongs land which properly is called Bereunit (Barwick-in-Elmet), in which there are 8 carucates for geld, and 4 ploughs may be there. Now Ilbert has it. In the demesne 12 ploughs and 48 villanes, and 12 bordars with 16 ploughs. There are 3 churches and 3 priests, and 3 mills of 10s. Wood pasturable, 2 lenga in length and one in breadth. Was worth £16, now the same."

If we accept the carucate as containing 120 acres, and this appears to be the unit after a great many comparisons in the carucated counties of England, we find that there were 2,160 acres of ploughed land within this manor before the Conquest. The comparative affluence of this manor was doubtless in some measure owing to its distinguished ownership in King Edward's time. While nearly all the manors north of Kippax show a great depreciation in value, owing to the devastation of the country by William's army in 1070, the Manor of Kippax, as its geldable value at the time of the Survey indicates, had, for some cause or other, escaped the violence of the Norman soldiery, who had marched at least three times through the domain.

Fairburn. "In Fareburne, Ligulf had 2 carucates and a half of land for geld, and 2 ploughs may be there. Now the same (Lignlf) has it of Ilbert. In the demesne one plough and 4 villanes, and 3 bordars with one plough, and 5 acres of meadow. It was worth 20s., now the same. To this manor belongs

* Cottars were tenants who occupied small tenements, with a curtilage, and paid a stated rent in provisions or money.

Bordars were husbandmen, holding a house and land, and were employed in various offices under their demesne lord.

Villanes were serfs employed in menial tasks, and were either annexed to the land, or to the person of the lord, and transferable *with* the land, or by deed from one owner to another, like any other chattel. They and their posterity were in bondage, and had sometimes the name of "native" applied to them.

Ledesha, where there are 2 carucates of land for geld, and one plough may be there. Now 2 villanes are there, and 3 borders with ploughs."

Featherstone. "In Ferestane and Prestone and Arduwic and Oscle (Nostell), Ligulf had 16 carucates of land for geld, and 6 ploughs may be there. Now Ralph and Ernulf have them of Ilbert. In the demesne 3 ploughs and 20 villanes, and 15 bordars with 7 ploughs. Two churches are there and 2 priests. Wood, pasturable one lenga in length and one in breadth. They were worth 100s., now 60s."

Darrington. "In Darnintone, Baret and Ailric had 6 carucates of land for geld, where 8 ploughs may be. Now Ilbert has 3 ploughs there and 16 villanes, and 6 bordars having 12 ploughs. A church is there and a priest, and one mill of 3s. It was worth 16Os., now 100s."

Glasshoughton with Castleford. "In Hoctun, Lewin had 6 carucates of land for geld, and 4 ploughs may be there. Now Ilbert has 3 ploughs there, and 14 villanes, and 4 bordars having 6 ploughs. Was worth 100s., now 80s."

Wheldale and Water Fryston. "In Queldale and Fristune, Gamel had 7 carucates of land for geld, where 5 ploughs may be. Now Gerbodo has them of Ilbert. He has 3 ploughs there and 4 villanes, and one bordar having 4 ploughs. A church is there and a priest, and 24 acres of meadow. They were worth 80s., now 30s."

Ferry Fryston. "In Fereia, Sweine had 5 carucates of land for geld, where 4 ploughs may be. Now Hamelin has it of Ilbert. He has there 2 ploughs and 3 villanes, with 2 ploughs and 3 acres of meadow. Was worth 50s., now 20s.

Knottingley. "In Notingeleia, Baret had 4 carucates of land for geld, and 4 ploughs may be there. Now Rannulf has it of Ilbert. He has there one plough and a half, and 6 villlanes, and 2 bordars with one plough and a half. Wood pasturable, half a lenga in length and 4 quarenteens in breadth. Was worth 80s., now 40s."

Kellington. "In Chelinctune, Baret had 2 carucates of land for geld, where one plough may be. Now Elric has it of Ilbert. He has half a plough there and one villane, and 2 borders. Wood pasturable half a lenga in length and 3 quarenteens in breadth, and 3 acres of meadow. Was worth 20s., now 5s."

From the above entries, transcribed from Domesday Book, we are enabled to compare the condition of the various Manors around Pontefract, and understand the proportion of prosperity, or otherwise, as affected by the dispossession of the

Saxon holders. We learn that Tanshelf (including Pontefract) was a Royal Borough, untaxed, and that Ledstone was the former residence of the great Earl Edwin, brother-in-law of King Harold.

Among the chief Saxon proprietors of this district had been Ailric, Sweine, Lewin, Gamel, Ligulf and Baret, and some of them were allowed to retain something, even if they found their wealth and power considerably diminished under their Norman masters. Lewin appears to have lost everything, for the De Lacies never subinfeudated Houghton, but retained the Manor in their direct possession as long as they held the Honor of Pontefract.

Gamel found himself deprived of all his Manors, but he was to a small extent compensated by gifts of Manors in other parts of the County.

Ligulf had been both wealthy and powerful, holding the Manors of Featherstone, Aketon, Whitwood, Purston, Hardwick and Nostell on the south side of the Aire, and Fairburn (with Ledsham) on the north bank ; but in 1086 he had lost all except the Fairburn Manor, and even that was, a few years later, granted by the De Lacies to the Pontefract monks, who held it right up to the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539.

Baret lost four out of his eight Manors, retaining only parts of Egborough, Kellington and Roall.

Ailric held his lands, much reduced in extent, under the Norman grantee, as did also Sweine and his son, Adam Fitz-Sweine, who inherited, and afterwards founded, Monk Bretton Priory. He died about 1158, having been in his time a very considerable person.

From the Domesday Record we also gather that the extinction of the old Saxon proprietors, by the Normans, was not so entire as is often alleged by historians—at least not in this district, dominated by Ilbert de Lacy.

CHAPTER II.

—o—

"The sacred taper's lights are gone,
Grey moss has clad the altar stone,
The holy image is o'erthrown,
The bell has ceased to toll.
The long-ribbed aisles are burst and shrunk,
The holy shrines to ruin sunk,
Departed is the pious monk—
God's blessing on his soul!" *Scott.*

The Rise of the Monasteries.

The Normans were on the whole deeply attached to the church; hence the erection of their baronial castles was contemporary with a great era of church building.

We purpose to devote this chapter to a brief history of the Priory of St. John the Evangelist, founded at Pontefract by the second De Lacy, at the instigation of Thurston, Archbishop of York, about the year 1090. It appears that William, the Prior of La Charité, chief of the Order of Clugni in France, by the common council of his whole convent of Cluniac monks, had a few years previous to the founding of St. John's Priory, sent to Pontefract some of the brethren, who took up their abode in St. Nicholas Hospital (a religious foundation dating from pre-Norman Times) until the completion of the new monastery.

The Priory of St. John.

This new foundation, which stood on the rising ground just north of the castle, and adjoining the Hospital of St. Nicholas, and still known as Monkhill, must have been in its day a place of considerable wealth and importance, judging from its reputation and extensive possessions, as set forth in

the numerous charters recording grants of lands and privileges which it received at various times. A transcript of the original charter is given in Dodsworth's "Monasticon," under the title of "Carta Roberti de Laceis primi fundatoris loci hujus." The following are the main clauses :—

> "I, Robert de Lacy, for my salvation and that of my lord William, the first king, and of Ilbert my father, and of Hawise my mother, have founded a house of religion in Kirkby, which I have subjected to the Cluniac monks of La Charité, and have given to the monks serving God there, and have confirmed to them the site of the place where they live, with all the land of Brackenhill, also the custody of St. Nicholas Hospital where they formerly lived, for the use of the poor; also from my demesne, Whitwood and the Mere, Ledstone and the half of Ledsham . . , and Dodsworth, with all the things belonging . . . and a carucate of land in Altofts, and in Kirkby a carucate of the gift of William Foliot, and the west mill of Kirkby, and the fishery from Whitwood to Queldale . . . . . also the churches of Kippax, Darrington . . . . . and the chapel of St. Clements, that it shall not be given to any other religious house . . . . . All these things I do confirm . . . . also whatever hereafter may be given to them in alms from my fee, or what they may similarly honestly acquire. Witnesses—William Peverel, William Folioth, Roger Pictavus."

This charter is undated, but would probably be about the year 1092 (William II.)

Hugh de Laval, who held the Honor of Pontefract during the temporary deprivation of the De Lacies (temp. Henry I.) confirmed the above charter, and granted to the monks additional lands, and the church of Clitheroe.

From this time forward the monastery continued to grow in wealth from grants and bequests of lands and privileges, but especially from the generosity of the De Lacies, each of whom on entering on his patrimony made some new grant to the priory. In the multiplied subinfeudations which took place during the 12th and 13th centuries, it was not uncommon for the barons to grant out their lands to laymen, who gave them to the religious houses in their respective localities. The Pontefract monastery certainly held many properties by this kind of tenure. The Priory became of the greatest ecclesiastical importance to the town and neighbourhood. Its monks supplied the spiritual necessities of the Churches of All

Saints, St. Giles, St. Clements in the Castle, and, after 1373, the Chantry of St. Thomas, right up to the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539.

In the Pontefract Chartulary, edited by the late Mr. Richard Holmes, is a copy of an Ecclesiastical Charter, dated 1160, which gives a list of the possessions of the Pontefract monks. A perusal of this lengthy document helps us to realize somewhat of the vast extent of their possessions at that period.

From some of their early charters we gather much interesting information regarding the topography of Pontefract during those remote times. We have the name "West Chepe" (West Market) adjoining Tanshelf, now the Corn Market; "Kirkby," the district around the church of All Saints; "Malfey-gate," now Southgate; "Magnus vicus" (High Street), afterwards Micklegate, and now part of it the Horsefair; "Gillygate," leading towards St. Giles's Church.

It is impossible to give any reliable account as to the number of monks of which this convent consisted, of its lay servants, or the internal economy of the house in its prosperous days, as no record has been preserved, but, from many chronicles, still extant, of similar religious houses in England, we learn a great deal of the manner of life led by the old monks of the Middle Ages.

The monastic ideal of seclusion from the world demanded economic independence, hence everything that was needed in the monastery was produced as far as possible by the monks and their lay brethren, upon the premises, as it were. That implied a garden for vegetables, and an orchard for fruit; lands for corn, with a mill in which to grind it; ponds for fish and woods for fuel. It meant architects, masons, carpenters and plumbers; an infirmary with its physicians and attendants; a guest-house or priory inn with its porters, ostlers and cooks. The common details of a domestic establishment of a hundred monks were enough to keep many persons busy. It is true that much of the heavy and menial work was done by the lay

brothers, but every monk had his share also, and went out daily with axe or spade, fishing-rod or pruning-hook, basket or barrow, to his appointed task. The crops must be planted and garnered, the fruits gathered, the wood cut, and the buildings kept in repair. Horses must be shod, sheep shorn, and clothing made. Accordingly, after the morning mass and chapter, this substantial activity engaged the brain and muscle of the monastery. The prior betook himself to his executive affairs, the sub-prior to his daily inspection of the establishment, the cellarer to his house-keeping, the sacrist to his care of the church, the doctor to his hospital, the almoner to his dependants at the gate, the master of the novices to his school, the scriptor to his copying, the chronicler to his manuscripts, others to the fields and woods. The ideal of the monastic life was an active day, wherein from dawn to dusk there should not be an idle hour.

That the religious houses exerted a great influence for good during the Middle Ages is a well-established fact. Probably no system connected with Christianity has exercised greater influence in its day than the monastic. In dark and turbulent times the cloister was often the refuge of the oppressed, the sole depository of learning, the chief guardian of religion. Here the poor and suffering received succour, the student instruction, the dying consolation. "Ever at the sacred gates sat Mercy, pouring out relief to the suffering—ever within the sacred aisles the voices of holy men were pealing heavenwards in intercession for the sins of mankind, ... the abbeys of the Middle Ages floated through the storms of war and conquest . . . . in the midst of violence remaining inviolate, through the awful reverence which surrounded them." *

Notices of Pontefract Monastery.

We purpose to refer briefly to a few ancient notices of the Priory of St. John, which may be of interest to our readers.

We have seen that Archbishop Thurston was the adviser of Robert de Lacy in the founding of this monastery. Thurston resigned his see of York in

* Froude.

January 1143, on account of his great age and infirmities, and, mindful of a promise made at Cluny in his youth that he would die a Cluniac monk, came to Pontefract, as the only Cluniac establishment in his diocese, that he might be there received among the brethren, and die in the Order. Here, a month after he came to Pontefract, he closed his mortal life, and is said to have been buried before the altar in the priory church. The life of this prelate was afterwards written by two of the Pontefract monks; the manuscript is still preserved in the Cotton Library.

A charter of 1253 confirms an agreement between prior Dalmatius of St. John Priory, and Hugh Biseth, priest of "Casterford," respecting the exchange of glebe land at Pontefract and "Alretune" (Allerton Bywater).

Adam Fitz-Sweine, the founder of Monk-Bretton Priory in 1156, was a special benefactor to St. John Priory. He made the former dependant on the Pontefract monks, and in acknowledgment of this its monks paid annually one mark of silver. He also appointed to the prior of Pontefract the power on the decease of a prior of Monk-Bretton to appoint his successor. As the latter priory rose in importance it attempted to free itself from its subjection to Pontefract, and affairs reached a climax on the death of a Monk-Bretton prior in 1269. The question came before Henry de Lacy, who sat in the hall of the Black Friar Preachers at Pontefract, along with Godfrey the Prior of St. John, Oliver Deincourt the Prior of the Black Friars, Sir Robert de Kippis, seneschal of Pontefract, and others, as arbitrators. The verdict was that in future the monks of Bretton should elect their own prior and manage their own internal affairs, paying annually nine marks to the Prior of Pontefract, and that the prior so elected should be installed in his office by the Prior of St. John, who also retained the privilege of sitting in the chapter of Monk Bretton whenever he thought fit so to do.

Early in the 14th century a history of this Pontefract monastery was written by one of its monks, named Thomas

de Casterford, but all trace of the work has disappeared, though more than one ancient historian quotes from the M.SS.

In 1352 (27 March) a commission was granted to a John Bishop to consecrate a certain altar within the conventual church of Pontefract, "lately erected on the south side thereof."

In 1322, the body of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, executed by order of Edward II. at Pontefract, was given to the monks, who interred it near the high altar. Many reputed miracles were said to have been wrought at the shrine of St. Thomas.

A visit of inspection to the English Cluniac Foundations was made by order of Yves de Chassant, during the latter part of the 13th century. The Abbot of Cluni, the Prior of Mont-Didier in France, and the English Prior of Lenton left Monk-Bretton on September 18th, 1279, and the report proceeds :—

> "The same day we came on to Pontefract, where the brethren number 27, including the Prior. They properly conduct and devoutly perform the Divine offices, leading also honest and commendable lives. The conventual buildings are well roofed and in good repair, and the Prior has added to them. The church is good, as also its ornamentation. As to its temporal wants, in respect of food or provisions, they are both abundant and sufficient until the next harvest. On his first appointment the Prior found the liabilities of the house to amount to 3,200 marks. It is twelve years since he first took it over, and now the debt is reduced to 350 marks, or even less; and this the Prior affirmed in the presence of the whole convent, in which all that community agreed. In addition to this, the Prior has obtained a small property of two carucates of land, which seems to be a profitable acquisition. Moreover, 15 years ago the convent incurred an obligation of 400 marks, for which it made itself liable for the Priory of Monk-Bretton, but it holds bonds and written securities from that house, by which the latter indemnify and protect it against loss."

In 1341 we find that a "William de Flexton obtained judgment against the Prior of Pontefract and another, for his common pasture of 120 acres of moor in Pontefract, belonging to the free tenement of William de Micklefield."

Among the Testamentary Burials we find that a William de Bayley made his will 13 August 1391, "giving his soul to

God Almighty, St. Mary and All Saints, and his body to be buried before the altar of St. Benedict, in the monastery of St. John, apostle and evangelist of Pontefract." John Autee, priest of the Parish Church of Castleford, made his will 6 January. 1431, " giving the soul to God Almighty and St. Mary, and his body to be buried in the monastery of St. John the Evangelist at Pontefract."

Passing on to the latter part of the 15th century, we find from the official letters in the Cotton Library, and other documents in the Rolls House, that many of the monastic establishments had deteriorated in religious practice.

In the year 1485 Pope Innocent VIII., moved by the accounts which reached him of the corruption of some of the houses of religion in England, granted a commission to the Archbishop of Canterbury to make inquiries whether these stories were true, and empowered him to proceed to correct and reform them as might seem good to him. This is tolerably clear proof that the laxity of discipline which had crept in was deemed so serious as to make extraordinary interference necessary.

The Dissolution of the Monasteries. Fifty years later the monasteries were suppressed by order of Henry VIII.

Many hard things were said about the monks at the time, but it must be remembered that they were said by interested persons in the heat of controversy. Even then, it was agreed that in the "great and solemn monasteries religion was right well kept." The monks were slandered wholesale, that they might the more conveniently be robbed. The king desired for various reasons, good and bad, to destroy the monasteries and take possession of their lands and treasures. He desired, also, like all the Tudors, to keep the good will of the people. The Commissioners sent to visit the religious houses and report upon them, understood the situation and met it. They showed that the monasteries were so bad that the nation ought to be happy to have its king suppress them. It is true that the enthusiasm for the monastic life was waning ; men were

turning their energies and finding their ideals in other directions. The monasteries inevitably degenerated, but "an enemy," as Burke said, "is a bad witness; a robber is a worse;" the judgment of most modern historians is in favour of the monks, and finds most of them to have been men of respectable and pious lives.

The religious houses were first visited by the King's Commissioners during the years 1536-7, and an inventory of their possessions taken. During the following year the inmates were ordered to surrender their property to the king. Most of the priors appear to have complied without serious protest, and received each a life-pension from the revenue. Among those so dealt with was the Priory of St. John, whose income was returned at £427 16s. 10½d., equivalent to some £9,500 of our money.

The Commissioners arrived at Pontefract in November, 1538. The account of the surrender is found in the Public Record Office, which document records that they had "quijetlye takine the surrenders, and dissolvyed the monasterie of Pountfrette, wher we perceyved no murmure ore gruge in anye behalfe, bot wer thankefullyy receyvede." Probably the monks themselves had come to the conclusion that the religious houses were no longer adapted to the times, and were satisfied with the pensions allotted to them, and the freedom to go where they liked in the future might reconcile some of them to their dispersion.

The king granted to James Thwaytes, the last prior of Pontefract, the deanery of St. Clements in the Castle, with all its tithes and emoluments, during the term of his natural life. He died at Darrington six years after, and his will dated, 13 October 1545 (proved 31 October 1545), is an interesting document in many respects. Among his bequests are legacies to the churches of "Darington, Leddesham, Womersley and Kipas," and "to the mendinge of Feribridgg and Castelforth bridgg, to eyther of theme vjs viijd." (See York Wills, Vol. xiii., p. 67).*

* See also Holmes's "Pontefract Black Friars."

The site of the Priory, with the buildings, gardens, orchards and the demesne lands to the same belonging, were let on a lease to Peter Newtas, Esq., at the annual rent of £23 17s. 8d. The same person also held on lease other lands and tenements in the town of Pontefract, which had belonged to the monastery at the annual rent of £6 15s. 5d., also 18 acres of arable land at Ferry Fryston at 18s. per an., as well as Darrington Mill, belonging to the deanery of St. Clements, at 20s. per an., and other lands at Carleton.

The site of the Priory, its buildings, tithes and emoluments continued to be farmed out on leases to various persons until the reign of Edward VI., when a grant (dated 11 May 1553) was made of all the property formerly belonging to the Priory within the township of Pontefract, to George, lord Talbot, as appears from the records in the Court of Exchequer.

This lord George Talbot had been in 1549 constituted High Steward of the Honor of Pontefract and Constable of Pontefract Castle, and on the 16 June 1588, when Pontefract Park was surveyed, it was reported that he "had the said Parke by indenture under the seal of the Duchy of Lancaster."

Some time between 1553 and 1559 the Priory buildings were dismantled, and judging from the fragments of ecclesiastical stonework used indiscriminately in the building of New Hall by lord George Talbot, we are fairly correct in assuming that this once imposing mansion was built mainly out of the material obtained from the Priory buildings. On no other hypothesis can we account for the carved mediæval masonry found in the interior walls of the New Hall ; and even the oaken beams still left show old morticed holes, evidencing that they had done duty in some still older building.

A daughter of the last lord Talbot married a Robert Pierrepoint, and thus brought this property at Pontefract into the Pierrepoint family. The mansion suffered severely during the Civil War of 1644-49. After being left tenantless for a great number of years, the roof was stripped of its lead in March 1812 during the Luddite Riots, lest the mob should

steal it for melting into bullets. The timbers were thus left exposed to the weather, with the result that the roof eventually decayed and fell in, and nothing now remains of the place but the bare walls of the fabric, fast crumbling away, but still forming a most interesting ruin.

CHAPTER VII.

—o—

"I see thy walls arise,
Beset with towers that meet the skies:
De Lacey's fiery banner flies
Above thy keep."—*John Wilson.*

Pontefract Castle.

The history of Pontefract for several centuries forward from the Conquest is bound up in the history of its feudal Castle and its lords. We purpose, therefore, to give a brief account of this historic fortress, and of the De Lacies, and subsequent holders of the Honor of Pontefract.

This once princely Castle originally covered, or enclosed, an area of some four acres. In the Chartulary of Kirkstall Abbey it is positively stated to have been founded by Ilbert de Lacy. On the site probably stood, in very remote times, some stronghold; the Round Tower was certainly erected upon a British, Roman or Saxon mound of artificial construction, of a composition of earth different from any forming the natural surface of the site.

Probably the Castle, when first founded by Ilbert de Lacy, consisted only of the Round Tower, or Keep, and the strong, massive walls around the natural plateau, which would render the place practically impregnable in those early times. At subsequent periods, as the art of war advanced, additional towers and embattlements were added, especially during the 13th and 14th Centuries, so that in its finished state it may be said to have combined the characteristics of a fortress and a palace.

Its high battlemented walls were flanked by seven strong

towers, while a deep moat, or fosse, protected its western side, on which were the barbican and drawbridge. Not being commanded by any contiguous hill, it was absolutely impregnable against direct assault, and could only be taken by blockade.

This famous Castle of Pontefract, founded by Ilbert de Lacy, was destined, for nearly six centuries, to play an important part in our national history.

In this stronghold the De Lacies lived for over two centuries, in a degree of splendour little inferior to that of Kings. They had their seneschals specially appointed to preside at their Courts, manage their demesne lands, and receive the rents of their tenants. They had their chaplains, heralds, guards and minstrels. Their retainers and vassals wore their badges, swelled the retinue of their lords on great occasions, and followed them to the battlefield in time of war.

Early in the 14th Century, the Castle and Honor passed by marriage from the De Lacies to the Plantagenet family, of Lancaster; and when Bolingbroke, the Lord of Pontefract, ascended the Throne in 1399, it became merged in the Duchy of Lancaster, as part of the demesne of the Crown, and was administered by Constables, whose office was at times regarded as hereditary.

The Castle continued thus an impregnable fortress, held by, or for, the Sovereign, and dominating a very important division of England; but what confirmed its importance was that, far above any castled eminence, it was "the key of the North," and became especially valuable during the Scottish invasions and the Wars of the Roses. During the wars of Charles the I. and the Parliament it was held as a military post for the King, and proudly upheld the cause of the Royalists until after the execution of the King; and had the honour of being the last fortress that fell into the hands of the Parliament.

Ilbert de Lacy.

That Ilbert de Lacy derived his name from that Lassi between Aulnai and Vire, in Normandy, belonging to the See of Bayeux, seems certain, for in 1146 this fief was still held by two of

PONTEFRACT CASTLE—REMAINS OF ROUND TOWER

this family. We do not know for certain whether Ilbert was present at the Battle of Hastings. Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, the superior lord of the fief of Lassi, appears in the battle-roll of Hastings, and in his contingent Ilbert and his brother Walter may have fought as vassals of the See of Bayeux. Of Ilbert's ancestry we know very little. He was without doubt a younger son, and is mentioned as heir of his mother Emma. The name of his father has not been preserved, but Walter de Lacy, who had an extensive territory given him on the Marches of Wales, was Ilbert's elder half-brother.

What special services he had rendered the Conqueror we know not, but they must have been of the most valuable kind to have been repaid by the grant of a great domain like that which afterwards constituted the Honor of Pontefract.

It would seem that this was given him in 1067, for a charter of his son Robert, giving to Gilbert, the hermit of Nostell, the Manor of Nether Sutton, adds: "Which my father had of the free gift of William, Duke of Normandy, *the year after he conquered England.*"

The extensive domain given him in Yorkshire consisted of 204 manors, of which 101 were in the Wapentakes of Skyrack, Osgoldcross, Staincross and Agbrigg. Earl Edwin's great lordship in Kippax, Ledstone and Barwick, with 3 churches, and soke in 14 hamlets, was probably not given him until 1071, for Earl Edwin was up to that date still a sort of honourable hostage in the King's Court, and his lands, we may suspect, though in the King's hands, were hardly yet forfeited, as they would be in 1071, when, despairing of his liberty, he escaped from Court, with his brother Morcar, and was soon after treacherously slain by his own people (*see Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*).

Having acquired this wide extent of territory, Ilbert de Lacy soon fixed upon an elevated site convenient to Ermine Street, the great northern road, and not far from where it crossed the Aire, for his Castle.

There is little to record of the personal history of this

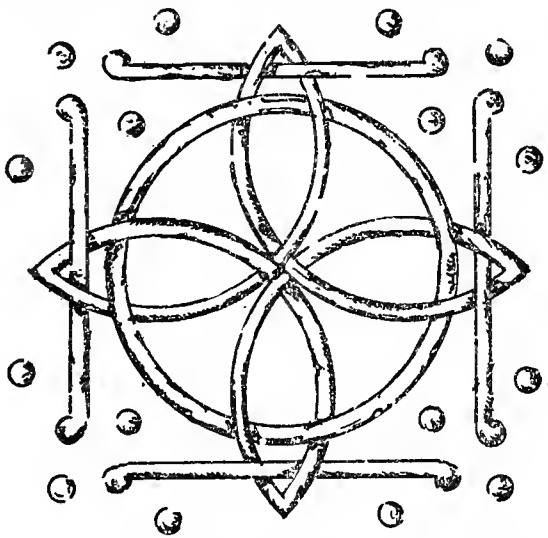
Norman baron, as his name rarely occurs in the Chronicles, but he seems to have allowed, either from policy or better feeling, a larger number of the old Saxon possessors to continue to hold a portion of their lands under him than was usual with the Norman lords. Subsequently to the date of the Survey (1086), he subinfeudated Leeds to Ralph Paganel, who is said by some historians to have been Ilbert's brother-in-law, though upon what authority is not quite clear. The personal history of the Pontefract De Lacies is chiefly to be gathered from the Charters of their monastery; but as this religious house was not founded during the lifetime of Ilbert, this source of information is not available. That his wife was named Hawise we learn from a Charter of his son Robert; that his younger son, Hugh de Lacy, was the second Abbot of Selby Abbey, and was a man of great piety and famous for his charitable deeds, we gather from the history of that religious house, founded by the Conqueror; and that Ilbert contributed to that Royal foundation the Manor of Hamilton, as well as lands at Stretton and Garforth (with the Church there), which Robert, his son, "for the soul of Hugh, my brother," confirmed; that he also founded St. Clement's Chapel within his Castle at Pontefract, as a place of worship for himself and retainers, and amply endowed it with lands and tithes, afterwards transferred to the priory there; these make up all that is known of him with any degree of certainty. With these meagre exceptions, we have been unable to trace in recorded history anything to give us a clue as to his personal character or achievements. For about 20 years he lived at Pontefract; we do not know with any certainty the exact date and place of his death, or where he was buried, though Dugdale states that he was buried at the right corner of the altar of St. Benedict (presumably in St. John's Priory at Pontefract); but as that monastery was not founded until after his death, we can put little confidence in Dugdale's narrative.

He evidently outlived the Conqueror, for Dugdale (Baronage I., 98), quoting a Charter formerly preserved at

Pontefract Castle, says that "Ilbert de Lacy obtained from William II. a confirmation of those customs belonging to his Castle of Pontefract as he had enjoyed *in the time of King William, his father.*"

He must, therefore, have died some time between 1087 and 1090, for his son Robert was in possession of the Castle and honor in 1090, as in that year he founded the Monastery of St. John the Evangelist at Pontefract, and a few years later the Church at Ledsham.

There is no clue to the arms of the original Lacies, but the seal of Roger de Lacy (1194) has on the reverse a sort of inter-*laced* device, which has been called by the Heralds, "the Lacy knot," and not improbably may have been their device from "Lacis," meaning "network" in French. Specimens of this design may yet be seen on the masonry of Ledsham and Kirk Smeaton Churches, built by Robert de Lacy.



Robert de Lacy.

The chief characteristic of Ilbert's son and heir, Robert de Lacy—otherwise known as Robert de Pontefract—was his zeal for church building. The period in which he lived was indeed a great

era for the erection of ecclesiastical buildings, for the Danes, who over-ran the country during the previous century, had well-nigh destroyed whatever savoured of Christianity. A proof of this we find in the "History of Northumbria," by Simeon of Durham, who, writing about the year 1074, states that "the cruel devastation of the Pagans had reduced many of the Churches to ashes."

Following upon such a condition of things, the Normans, who, generally speaking, were devoted sons of the Church, found the ruined Churches required re-building, and that they devoted their energies to this work is attested by the considerable remains of Norman architecture to be found in many of our old Parish Churches. We need only refer to the Norman work still visible in the Churches at Birkin, Ledsham, Kippax and others in the immediate neighbourhood as a proof of the zeal of the De Lacies in this direction. Robert de Lacy is also said to have re-founded the Priory of St. Oswald, at Nostell, but the chroniclers are somewhat obscure on this point, as the name of Robert de Lacy is frequently confounded with a Roger de Lacy, his contemporary.

The life of Robert de Lacy was by no means of a peaceful character. On the tragic death of William II., in 1100, his youngest brother, Prince Henry, seized the Crown of England during the absence of his elder brother, Robert, Duke of Normandy, in the First Crusade. When the Duke returned from the Holy Land he laid claim to the English Throne, and received the support of many of the barons, who, having large estates in Normandy, feared that if Robert held Normandy without the English Throne, he might deprive them of the estates they held there. Robert de Lacy was one of those who invited the Duke to make an effort to secure the Throne of England; their design appears to have been to unite the two Crowns in one person, that they might secure their possessions in both countries.

Robert de Lacy espoused the cause of the duke, and was present at the Battle of Tenchebrai, fought in Normandy in

1106, where his party suffered a defeat, which resulted in Duke Robert spending the rest of his life a prisoner in Cardiff Castle.

King Henry I. punished those barons who had actively supported the claims of his brother, and thus Robert de Lacy was deprived of the Castle and Honor of Pontefract and banished the realm. There is no evidence that his manors left the King's hands, for Robert de Lacy afterwards became reconciled with the King, and returned to Pontefract; but, offending once more, he was finally dispossessed about 1121, and spent the rest of his days in exile. He died before 1131, leaving three sons—Ilbert, Walter and Henry, and a daughter, Albreda. The latter was married in 1131 to Robert de Lissours, and is then styled "*sister to Ilbert de Lacy,*" and not "*daughter of Robert de Lacy,*" from which we infer that her father was not then living.

Hugh de Laval.

After the final banishment of Robert de Lacy, the King bestowed the forfeited estates on one Hugh de Laval, probably as a reward for his active adherence to the fortunes of Henry in the contest against the claims of Duke Robert.

This Hugh de Laval held, or "defended," the Honor of Pontefract for a period of 24 years. We know little about him, except what may be gathered from his various Charters to religious foundations, his endowments to the Monastery of St. John, and to some of the Churches in the neighbouring villages. It is of some interest to find in one of his Charters that the Danish name "Kirkby" is applied to Pontefract, thus showing that the older name had not completely died out as late as 1125.

The Pontefract Church of St. Giles (the patron saint of cripples), then known as St. Mary de Foro (*i.e.*, of the market place), and the Church at Featherstone, were at this period held jointly by the canons of St. Oswald Priory, at Nostell, and St. John Priory, at Pontefract, an arrangement that did not work very smoothly. This joint possession, we find from

a document in the Nostell Chartulary under date 1123, was terminated by Hugh de Laval, the Pontefract monks exchanging their rights in Featherstone Church with the monks of Nostell for their rights in the Pontefract Church. This exchange received the ratification of the King, as witness the following transcript of his Charter :—

> "Henry, King of England, to Thurston, Archbishop of York, and to the justiciaries, etc., greeting.—Know, that I have permitted the exchange which has been made by Thurston, the Archbishop, and Hugh de Laval, between the monks of St. John, Pontefract, and the canons of St. Oswald—that is to say, to the said canons the Church of Featherstone, with the lands and all things to that Church belonging, which the aforesaid monks give to him in exchange for the half of the Church of St. Mary de Foro, of Pontefract, and for half of the district belonging to that Church. And, besides, I confirm to the aforesaid monks 45s. rent yearly, which Hugh de Laval gives to them for the aforesaid exchange—that is to say, the Church of Ledsham, with its rents, and with other rents to complete those 45s., and they may hold the exchange as if certainly theirs, both well and in peace and quietly. Witnesses, etc." Dated 1123.

William Maltravers.

After the death of Hugh de Laval in 1131, the Honor of Pontefract was divided. Two-thirds was granted to a William Maltravers (otherwise William Transversus) for the term of fifteen years. Guy de Laval, the son of Hugh, held at least some part of the remainder, for we find, from the "Great Roll of the Pipe" for 1131, that Maltravers was ordered to pay an annuity of £100 per an. to the widow of Hugh de Laval, and the same record states that Guy de Laval was entitled to 40 marks (£26 13s. 4d.) from Maltravers.

The latter lord, however, only held, or "defended," the Honor of Pontefract for a brief period of five years, as he was, in 1136, assassinated by a certain knight named Paganus. This we learn from the account given by Richard of Hexham, who states that :—

> "William, by surname Transversus, who, by a grant of King Henry, held the Honor of Pontefract, being struck there by a certain knight, his own liegeman, died . . . . . then the honor, which King Henry had taken from his father, Robert de Lacy, was regained by the son, Ilbert de Lacy . . . . and many similar cases occurred at that time throughout England."

We infer from this that others who had forfeited their estates through having supported Duke Robert in 1106 were

restored, either in person or their heirs, by King Stephen, who succeeded Henry I. in 1135.

Another monkish chronicler, John of Hexham, gives the following version of the restoration of the De Lacies :—

> "This man (*i.e.*, Ilbert de Lacy 2nd) and his father (Robert de Lacy) had been banished by King Henry from the realm of England, but the King being dead, a certain William Transversus, who, by the late King's gift, defended that Honor of Pontefract, was slain, and this Ilbert took possession of the honor by right of inheritance."

Ilbert de Lacy (2nd).

What hand Ilbert de Lacy had in the assassination of the man who held his honor we know not, though the coincidence of Transversus' assassination with the death of King Henry, the enemy of Ilbert, arouses suspicion. Having no evidence, we assume that King Stephen, who had usurped the Crown on the death of Henry I., to the exclusion of Matilda (or Maud), the only surviving child of Henry I., had found in the exiled Ilbert a strong supporter. What *is* clear, however, is that Ilbert de Lacy, the banished heir of Robert de Lacy, was restored to his patrimony in 1136, and rose high in favour with the new King.* He was present, with his brothers Walter and Henry, at the Battle of the Standard, in 1138, against David, King of Scotland, who invaded the realm in an attempt to place Matilda on the Throne. Chief among the slain at this English victory was Ilbert's brother, Walter de Lacy.† Three years later, however, Ilbert strangely disappears from history. He was present at the Battle of Lincoln, in 1141, where Stephen was taken prisoner. It is not clear whether Ilbert de Lacy was amongst the prisoners, or amongst the slain ; we have found in history no record as to his fate.

He appears to have left no child to inherit, for we find that Stephen, who regained his Crown the same year, granted the Pontefract barony to William de Romare, Earl of Lincoln, on whose death, in 1146, Henry de Lacy (brother of Ilbert de Lacy) obtained the Castle and Honor of Pontefract, after a

* Richard, a monk of Hexham. † See Baker's Chronicle.

contest with Gilbert de Gaunt, who had married the heiress of William de Romare. During this local war between the two claimants and their retainers, the Pontefract monastery suffered partial destruction, but was rebuilt and re-consecrated in 1159, as we may learn from the Charters of that religious foundation.

That a small war between rival claimants could take place, and the victor set aside the nominee of the King, is a proof of the power of the barons and the weakness of the King, during those turbulent times.

CHAPTER VIII.

—o—

"Therefore, friends,
As far as to the Sepulchre of Christ, . . .
Forthwith a power of England shall we levy
To chase these pagans from those holy fields,
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet
Which, fourteen hundred years ago, were nailed,
For our advantage, on the bitter Cross.—*Shakespeare's "Henry IV."*

Henry de Lacy. Henry de Lacy held the Castle and Honor of Pontefract for a period of over forty years. An interesting Charter, dated 1181, records a Royal visit to Pontefract by Henry II., in the course of a journey northward in the company of William, King of Scotland. It was probably during this Royal visit that Henry de Lacy obtained from the King the Charter to hold an annual fair at Pontefract, to commence on St. Giles's Day (1st September).

These annual fairs for the sale of various descriptions of merchandise are thus of very great antiquity. The privilege of holding them was granted by the King, or by the lord of the manor—in most cases, to some religious house in or near the town. To this connection with the Church may be traced the custom of holding the fair on the feast day of the patron saint of the place; thus, in the case of this particular fair, it was to be held on St. Giles's Day, the patron saint of the Church at Pontefract.

At a somewhat later date we find the Archbishop of York granting to the prior and monks of Pontefract a Charter for the holding of a

"Weekly market on Wednesdays, in the village of Barnsley, and

one yearly fair, to last four days—that is to say, on the eve and day of St. Michael, and the two following days, with all the liberties and usages to such market and fair belonging."

In this instance St. Michael was the patron saint of a Church attached to the Hospital of St. Nicholas, which was under the wardenship of the monks of St. John Priory, at Pontefract.

From the "Arundell's Register of Wills, Ebor," folio 24, we find that a William Bayley, of Pontefract, who directs that his body shall be buried in the monastery at Pontefract, bequeathed "towards the buildying of a brigge at Castilford, xxs."

This is dated 1391, and is the earliest notice we have discovered of the erection of the old seven-arched stone bridge at Castleford, which was finally demolished in 1804, to be superseded by the present county bridge of three arches.

Kirkstall Abbey.

Though Henry de Lacy held the Pontefract fee for such a long period, we know but little of his personal history. He is said to have built a Church at Castleford, but we have found no documents confirming this, though the earliest mention we have of Castleford Church dates from this period. We *do* know that he founded St. Botolph's, at Knottingley. Neither of these places possessed a Church at the time of the Domesday Survey.

The greatest work, however, of this lord of Pontefract was the founding of the Abbey of Kirkstall.

From the records of this stately Abbey we learn that Henry de Lacy, in pursuance of a vow made when labouring under a severe illness, that "if he shudd recovre he woulde builde an abbay, in honour of the Blessed Virgin, of the Cistercian Order," founded, on his recovery, the Monastery of St. Mary, at Barnoldswick, in Craven.

The monks, however, only remained there six years, enduring great hardships from the incursions of the marauding Scots. Compelled to seek a more peaceful retreat, Alexander,

their first abbot, wandering on the banks of the Aire, reached a habitation of anchorites at Kirkstall, and, being pleased with the beauty of the place, he persuaded Henry de Lacy to remove the monastery from Barnoldswick to Kirkstall. Henry de Lacy obtained the grant of the site from William Pictavensis, erected the magnificent Abbey, and dedicated it to the Blessed Virgin Mary. When Henry de Lacy died he was buried with "great pageantry" in this Abbey, which he had founded and richly endowed.

Robert de Lacy (2nd). He was succeeded by his only son Robert, who was born in 1166. The only historical record we have been able to find about him is that he was one of the barons present at the Coronation of Richard I. in 1189. Three years after that event he died, having survived his father only five years, and with his death, without issue, in 1193, expired the male line of the first house of the Pontefract De Lacies.

The Crusades. Frequent references will be found during the course of this history to the part taken by several of the Pontefract lords in the Crusades, one of the most remarkable episodes in the history of Western Europe.

This heroic conception of the Middle Ages was the outcome of a genuine religious feeling. The Crusades were a series of struggles extending from 1100 to 1260, having for their objective the rescue from the hands of the Mahomedans of an insignificant country, but a land hallowed to the Normans by its associations with One whom they acknowledged as their Lord and Master.

When Syria was over-run by the Saracens, its holy shrines profaned, and pilgrims persecuted and slain, the cry went up from the churches and monasteries of this land, and people were daily listening to the story of the wrongs and sacrileges which were being perpetrated by the infidels. During the period of which we are now treating the public enthusiasm for this cause reached its zenith ; there was hardly

a man of substance who was not willing to stake life and fortune in this heroic enterprise, hence we find that several of the De Lacies were able to gather round their standard many of the most important men in their barony, who marched forth with their feudal lord to do battle against the Saracen hosts.

In this connection we may observe that from these warlike enterprises originated the Knight Templars, one of whose foundations was established at Temple Hurst, near Birkin, and received several grants of lands and privileges from the Pontefract De Lacies.

There are good grounds for locating the Templestowe of Scott's romance of "Ivanhoe" at Temple Hurst. *(See Worsfold's "History of Haddesay" and Wheater's "Temple Newsum.")*

CHAPTER IX.

———o———

"Ages have passed since the vassal horde
Rose at the call of their feudal lord;
Serf and chief, the fettered and the free,
Are resting beneath the greenwood tree—
And the blazon'd shield, and the badge of shame,
Each are alike an empty name."—*Anon.*

Roger de Lacy.

At the death of Robert de Lacy, the Castle and Honor of Pontefract passed to the descendants of his cousin, Albreda de Lissours, grand-daughter of the first Robert de Lacy. This Albreda had married Richard Eitz-Eustace, Constable of Chester, by whom she had a son, John Fitz-Eustace, who accompanied Richard I. on the Third Crusade, and was slain at Tyre, in the Holy Land, 5th October, 1190. His son, Roger Fitz-Eustace, inherited the Pontefract fee. We find him levied at 135 marks (£45 15s.) towards the sum paid for the ransom of King Richard from his German prison, in 1194. In this scutage list he is styled "Rogerus Cestria, successor of Henrici de Lacieo;" subsequently, however, he assumed the surname of De Lacy.

The Lacy Arms.

It is interesting to note that the earliest of the Pontefract Charters, still preserved among the Archives of the town, was granted by this lord. Its principal object was the farming out of the rents of his Pontefract property, and the appointment of a prætor to collect the same, and bears date, Westminster, 6th of the Ides of June, in the 5th year of King Richard (*i.e.*, 8th June, 1194). This Charter is engrossed with the oldest known

example of the armorial bearings of the Pontefract lords, viz., "Quarter Or and Gules," to which was afterwards added the label of three (sometimes five) points, and this combination forms the Lacy arms. After 1232 the Pontefract De Lacies, who were also Earls of Lincoln, often used the arms of that earldom, viz., "Gules, a lion rampant," but these were not the Lacy Arms, as is sometimes stated.

Richard I. died a violent death in France, in 1199, and was succeeded by his brother John, who set aside the claims of his nephew Arthur, the rightful heir, as son of John's elder brother, Geoffrey.

Mistrusting the fidelity of some of the barons, among whom he numbered Roger de Lacy, the new King secured John, the young son and heir of Roger, and kept him as a kind of hostage. Roger de Lacy, however, gave signal proofs of his loyalty to the usurper, and soon rose in the Royal favour, being subsequently employed in several important offices of trust, especially the command of an armed force to defend Normandy against the men of Poitou.

John de Lacy.

Roger de Lacy died about 1211, and was succeeded by his son John, a minor. Though "seized" of the Honour of Pontefract, it is clear that the King retained the Castle in his own hands.

Among the local records of this period, we have one referring to a "Peter of Pomfret," a poor hermit, who, in 1213, foretold that the King should lose his Crown "this very yere," for which rash prediction the unfortunate prophet was sentenced to be trailed at the tails of horses, and afterwards hanged on a gibbet.

In 1215 we find the name of John de Lacy in the list of those barons who joined with Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, in compelling the King to sign "Magna Carta." The following year the King died, and John de Lacy took possession of his Castle of Pontefract. He appears to have been a man of devotional character, and joined the Crusaders, taking with him to the Holy Land a very large body of his

dependants, among whom were the priests of Kippax and Aberford, whose names are preserved as witnesses to the following Charter, granted at Damietta, in the year 1218 :—

"Carta Johannis de Lacico. To all . . . . know that I, John de Lacy, Constable of Chester . . . . have confirmed to God, and St. Mary, and the Church of All Saints in Pontefract . . . certain land, which lies without the burying-ground of the said Church . . . preserving the width of the said roads next adjoining on both sides, which they had on the very day on which I commenced my journey to the Holy Land, Jerusalem. Witnesses—Roberto Gramatico, persona de Edburford, magistro; Rogero, medico persona de Kippis, etc., etc. Apud Damietam."

Serfdom.

The following translation of a local charter dated 1220 serves to illustrate another phase of the social conditions of these mediæval times :—

"Know . . . . that I, Hugh, Priest of Castleford . . . . have confirmed and quit-claimed to the Monks of St. John the Evangelist, at Pontefract, Serlo, my native (*i.e.*, serf), son of Thomas Kirkman, of Castleford, to be held and possessed by the said monks . . . . with all his children which shall come after him, and that this my gift, etc. . . ." Witnessed by Ranulf de Casterford and others.

The translation of a similar deed dated 1230 runs :—

"I, William, son of Hameric, of Whitwood, have confirmed to the Monks of St. John the Evangelist, at Pontefract, Robert, son of Moses, my native, of the mere, to be held and possessed by the said monks, etc."

These documents throw an instructive side-light upon the system of serfdom during these Middle Ages. Serfs were properly annexed *to* and sold *with* the land, or "villanes en gross" annexed to the *person* of the lord, but the above extracts prove that they were also transferrable by deed, as mere chattels or beasts of burden, from one owner to another.

John de Lacy married for his second wife, Margaret, daughter and heiress of Robert de Quincey, and by her right afterwards became entitled to the earldom of Lincoln, and assumed the Lincoln arms, which by royal charter dated 1232 (Henry III.) was confirmed to him and his heirs.

An Ancient Rent List.

A local record of this period is still extant, being the half-yearly rental of the bailiwick of Pontefract. It is inscribed on an old roll, and is undated, but as the name of Robert de

Stapylton is mentioned, we may fairly suppose it to be about the year 1238, as his name appears as a witness along with Adam de Neireford, who held the office of seneschal of Pontefract in 1238.

The following is a transcript :—

"The farme, tols and perquisites of markets and faires, xls.;
Stallage, 1d.; the farme of Ingiisher, xviijli. xiijs. ijd.;
The farme of the Mores, cxjs.;
The bakehouse, xli. vjs. viijd.;
The farme of Pipard, xiijs.;
The lands of Winckon, vjs.;
Simon, filius Simoni, for the land of St. Giles, xxiiijd.;
Simon de Rupe, iiijs.;
Roger Crossland, xxiiijd.;
John Gledhall, xvjd.;
Henry Dixon, vjd.;
Robert de Stapyltone, xijd.;
Simon Knot, viiijd.;
,, ,, for the forge nere the Church of All Saints, iiijd.;
,, ,, for the forge nere the Castell, iijd.;
Johannis, filius Warini, for a tenement of the Prior of Pontefract, xixs. iijd.;

Adam de Neireford, Seneschal."

Robin Hood.

About the period of which this chapter treats, lived the famous Robin Hood, the bold outlaw and skilful archer, commonly reputed one of the numerous claimants to the earldom of Huntington. For many years this free-booter roamed through the forests stretching from Sherwood to York, plundering many a fat abbot, but befriending the poor and oppressed, so that the common people long afterwards continued to regard his exploits with pride.

The Pontefract District seems to have been one of his favourite resorts. At Wakefield is still pointed out the place where tradition says he fought with George a Green, pinder or pound-keeper of that ancient township, while near to Wentbridge on the Barnsdale Road another tradition credits him with having robbed the bishop of Hereford, and then compelled the prelate to dance a measure with him under the greenwood-tree.

Leland, describing his travels in 1550, says :—

"Along the left hand, a 3 miles of, betwixt Milburne and Feribrigge, I saw the Wodd and famose Forrest of Barnesdale, wher they say that Robyn Hudde lyvid like an outlaw."

In honour of Robin Hood, there is a Well named after him, situated midway between Ferrybridge and Doncaster on the Great North Road. The ornamental four-arched stone canopy, designed by Sir John Vanbrugh, the architect of Castle Howard, was erected in 1750 at the expense of the Earl of Carlisle.

In Olden Times, to name a spring or well after any person was to confer very great honour, hence we infer from the name given to this particular well, how much the memory of Robin Hood was cherished by the people of those times.

Near to this Barnsdale Road stands the ancient chapelry of All Saints, at the hamlet of Skelbrook in the parish of South Kirkby. The original church which stood on the site of the present edifice, is reputed to have been founded by Robin Hood, and to have been the "chapel in Barnisdale" to which he is made to refer in the well-known ballad :—

"I built me a chapel in Barnisdale,
Which seemly is to see ;
It is of Mary Magdaline,
And thereto would I be."

This ancient chapel of Skelbrook was formerly attached to the Priory of St. Mary Magdaline at Monk Bretton, and the "three cups," the arms of that priory, may yet be seen on an ancient stone, built into the porch of the present church there, and is doubtless a relic of the old 13th century chapel of Skelbrooke.

Among the early collections of the historic ballads of England, none were certainly more popular, or have continued so during several centuries, than those which relate to this outlaw, and as truly national songs, illustrative of the manners and exploits of notorious characters of by-gone days, there is no doubt that those relating to Robin Hood have exerted considerable influence over a large portion of the community,

as witness the games which have been instituted to his memory, the dramatic exhibitions, place-names, sign-posts, and innumerable rhymes in commendation of him and his companions. How it has come to pass that an individual who is described as an outlaw and a robber, should attain so great a degree of popularity as he has done, forms a very interesting subject of inquiry.

The grave of Robin Hood is supposed to be at Kirklees near Wakefield. The stone which for a long period marked the place is said to have never had any inscription, and, from its bearing a sculptured cross, may have been originally placed over the remains of some ecclesiastic. A more modern head-stone, however, near the spot, bore the oft-quoted epitaph believed to be entirely spurious :—

" Here Undernith this laci stean
Laz robert, earl of Huntington.
Ner arcir yet az hie sae geud,
An pipl kauld im robin Heud ;
Sich outlawz az hi an iz men
V'll Inglande nivr si agen.
Obüt 24 kal : Dekembris, 1247.

CHAPTER X.

———o———

'The noble blood of Lacy name,
Heroes emblazoned high to fame,
In long array.
How in the onward course of time,
The landmarks of that race sublime
Were swept away." *Anon.*

Edmund de Lacy.

Resuming our history of the De Lacies, we note that John de Lacy died at Pontefract in 1240, and was succeeded by his son Edmund, a minor, who thus became a ward of the king, and was placed under the tutelage of Richard, a Dominican friar, who became bishop of Chichester. Edmund de Lacy evidently appreciated his instructor, for he afterwards founded and dedicated to his memory the House of the Black Friars of Pontefract.

The Friar Preachers formed a mendicant order, which was founded at Toulouse, in France, about the year 1215, by Dominic Gusman, a Spaniard of noble birth. The Order was introduced into England in 1221, and the monks were popularly known as "Black Friars" and "Dominicans."

Ralph de Bocking, a contemporary friar, has left an account of the religious character of Edmund de Lacy, and of his desire to extend the new religious order, by founding an establishment near his own castle. Having chosen a suitable site, he went to the spot accompanied by discreet men in order that he might personally make over the property to the friars,

and lay the foundation stone of the house. Taking the stone he accordingly set it, saying :—

> "In honour of our lady Mary, Mother of God and Virgin, and of St. Dominic the confessor, to whose fraternity I assign this place, and of St. Richard, bishop and confessor, formerly my teacher and dearest friend, desirous of establishing a church on this spot, I lay the first stone."

Pontefract House of the Friar Preachers.

The Religious House thus founded continued for nearly three centuries to exercise an important influence in the ecclesiastical affairs of the town and neighbourhood. It shared the fate of the rest of the monastic establishments at the Dissolution, and so thoroughly has it been swept away during the onward march of Time, that not the slightest trace of St. Richard's Church or the monastery remains. The site is located at the western end of Southgate, near the junction of the Wakefield and Ackworth roads, and its memory is still retained in the name of Friar Wood Hill in the immediate vicinity.

This religious house does not appear to have possessed any landed property outside its site and buildings, but depended on voluntary gifts and bequests for its maintenance. Many of the local wills of the 14th and 15th centuries (now preserved at York) contain bequests of money to the "Blak Feres of Pountfrette."

The friars were the missionary preachers of those times, who travelled from hamlet to hamlet, and, taking their stand at some ancient cross, or under the shade of trees on the village green, preached the gospel to the people. A local record of 1505 informs us that a Robert Austwick of Pontefract left by will a sum of 3s. 4d., "to the amendment of the road *near the cross* at Carleton, from which the ferers are wont to preach and exhort."

A local charter dated 1258, i.e., contemporary with the foundation of this fraternity, records a grant of dead wood to the monks of St. John, to compensate them for the loss of tithe from the plot of ground which Edmund de Lacy had

given to the newly-established body, to which tithes the monks were entitled as holding the living of All Saints, then the Parish Church of Pontefract.

In 1269 a dispute arose between the monks of St. John and Monk-Bretton, respecting the appointment of prior at the latter convent, and it was in the House of the Pontefract Friar Preachers at Pontefract, that the controversy was settled by arbitration. (See Dugdale's Monasticon.)

In its most flourishing period, the foundation appears to have numbered only about forty monks, but, humble though the establishment was, on several occasions it had the honour of entertaining royalty within its walls ; we have records of visits from the first three Edwards in 1301, 1310 and 1334-5 respectively. It was at this place that Edward I. lodged his queen, Margaret, during his absence on the Scottish campaign, and in St. Richard's Church, the Duke of York and his son, the earl of Rutland, slain at Wakefield Green in 1460, found a temporary resting-place, prior to the removal of their remains to Fotheringay.

At the dissolution of the monasteries the Commissioners appointed by Henry VIII. arrived at Pontefract on the 26th November, 1538, and received the surrender of the place and its contents for the use of the king. The Deed of Resignation is signed by Robert Day, prior ; Richard Lorde, Henrie Chandlar, George Lesbore, Andrew Nyk, Wyllm Bramhall, Thomas Rawlyng, priests, and Wyllm Chandlar, a novice. The movable property was then sold, and out of the proceeds the prior received 13s. 4d., and each friar 5s. ; and the little community was dispersed.

The Will of James Thwaytes, the last prior of St. John at Pontefract, who died at Darrington in 1545, records a bequest to "Robert Day of Lumby, last prior of the House of Blak Feres at Pauntfratte," from which record we learn that Robert Day was then living at the village of Lumby, near Sherburn. He had once been the priest of the Chantry of St. Thomas, which held lands at Lumby, so that it is not im-

probable that he continued to hold some appointment there after he had been turned out of his post as prior at the Pontefract House of Black Friars, but we have met with no ducument to confirm this supposition.

During the following century the building and site of the Friar Preachers appear to have been let out on leases, and eventually came into the possession of the Austwick family of Pontefract, apparently by purchase from the Crown. Though the buildings had entirely disappeared before the end of the 16th century, a portion of the site continued to be used as a burial-place at least until well on into the 17th century, for an entry in the Church Books at Pontefract records :—

> "June 27tb, 1650, Alice Austwicke, widow of the late Thomas Austwicke, Alderman, departed this life, and her corps was interred in their proper buryal place at Free Wood Orcharch, the 28th daye of the same."

From the Austwicks the property passed by purchase to a Thomas Heseltyne about the year 1653, and early in the 18th century it was sold to Dr. Marmaduke Fothergill, a nonjuring clergyman who took up his residence in Pontefract, after quitting the living of Skipwith near Selby at the Revolution. He died at Westminster 7th September, 1731, bequeathing his Pontefract possessions towards the establishment of a lectureship in St. Giles Church.*

Twenty years later a new vicarage was established at the ruined church of All Saints, Pontefract, when this endowment was diverted, and became one of the principal provisions for the living thus created.

The Wallis Family.

Among the Pontefract Charters of the time of Edmund de Lacy, is one dated April, 1248, by which :—

> "Ricardo Wallensis, for his soul's health, confirms the following to the monks of St. John the Evangelist at Pontefract : 2 bovates of land at Friston, the gift of William de Friston, and the meadow which they had in Ferrifield of the gift of Jordan de St. Mary and the Lady Alice Haget his wife."

This William de Friston was returned in the time of

* See Taylor's "Yorkshire Anecdotes," page 118. Also Holmes's "History of the Pontefract Black Friars."

Henry II., as holding three knights' fees under a charter of Hugh de Laval, and two under Henry de Lacy.

Richard Wallis was a descendant of Henry Wallis, who married Dionysia, daughter of William Pictavus of Whitwood and Burg (Burg-Wallis, near Campsall), which latter place Henry Wallis inherited through his wife.

An inquest held at Potterlame 2 March 1307 records that:

> "Richard de Waleis pays a yerely rent of 15s. for a water-mill at Burghen-Walleis, given by his ancestors to the House of the Templars at Temple Hurst."

This family also gave the distinctive title of "Wallis" to the manor of Newton, for in the 14th and 15th century documents the place is always styled "Newton-Wallis." From the charters of the period we are able to locate with tolerable certainty the manor-house of this family, which is now a diminutive ruin, surrounded by the remains of an ancient moat, and locally known as "Newton Priory."

Several members of the Wallis family held at various times the high office of seneschals to the De Lacies, and their names appear as witnesses to many important grants of lands and privileges to the Pontefrant monks.

From a careful study of the Ledstone Charters, it seems reasonable to conclude that the so-called ruins of "Newton Priory" are the remains of the manor-house of the Wallis family; it is there located as "lying east of Ledston" and "north of the great river" (i.e., the Aire), and "bounded by the Lindyke," which we assume to be what is now known as "the moat." Here this family lived uninterruptedly for at least seven generations, from the 12th until the 14th century. This Newton Manor was escheated in 1322 by Edward II., in consequence of the active part taken by the owner Richard Wallis, in the rebellion headed by Thomas, earl of Lancaster, but was restored to his son Stephen Wallis in 1332 (Edward III.), and with him the family name ceases. This Stephen Wallis was buried in 1347 in the Priory of Healaugh, near Tadcaster. His daughter and heiress Elizabeth married for

her second husband Sir John Depeden, who succeeded to the manor of Healaugh, but we have been unable to trace how the Newton Manor was disposed of Sir John Depeden made bequests to several monastic houses, including Kirklees and Esholt, but his will makes no mention of Newton, except that a John de Newton is named as one of his executors. This John de Newton was Treasurer of the Cathedral Church of York, and died and was buried in that city in 1413.

How these ruins at Newton obtained the title of "Priory" is a question which in the absence of documentary evidence we are unable to answer. This title suggests that it was used as a conventual retreat, or had been converted into a private obit or oratory of the descendants of Stephen Wallis at some period prior to the dissolution of the monasteries. It is well known that during the Civil Wars of 1644-8 the Scot's Major-General Crawford sprung a mine under St. Mary's Tower at York, and in the fall of this tower perished a vast body of the history of many of the small chapels or chantries of Yorkshire, for it was the repository of the records of many of the dissolved Religious Houses north of Trent, the greater portion of which thus perished. *

Ancient Records.

While the honor of Pontefract was in the king's hands during the minority of Edmund de Lacy, we find from a grant under date 7 August, 1244, that the king gave to his brother Richard, earl of Cornwall, 50 head of deer from his park at Pontefract with which to stock his park at Knaresborough.†

In the local charters of this period the names of Robert and Roger de Quincey (earls of Winchester) frequently occur. The connection between the families of Lacy and Quincey arose from the marriage of John de Lacy with Margaret, daughter and heir of Robert de Quincey.

During the minority of Edmund de Lacy, Robert de Quincey became possessed of some interest in the Pontefract fee. For instance, in No. 52 of the Pontefract Chartulary is

* See Drake's "Eboracum," p. 575.
† See Close Roll 28th, Henry III.

a missive under date 19 Oct. 1233 from Archbishop Gray, notifying his institution of Milo, the presentee of the prior of Pontefract to the church of Kippax, and recording that he had done so as a consequence of the decision in a suit-at-law between the prior and convent on the one part, and Robert de Quincey on the other, which had terminated in favour of the convent.

In the Dodsworth M.SS. is an extract taken from "a great book in the Duchy Office" :—

> "I, Roger de Quincey, have given to Edmund Lacy, my cousin, the manors of Kippax and Scales (Scholes). Witness--Richard, Earl of Cornwall."

An explanation of this gift may be found in an Inquisition as to the value of Elmesale (Elmsall) late of Roger de Quincey, earl of Winchester, made 20 November 1264, where it is recorded that he had some time before exchanged "the manor of Elmesale with Edmund de Lacy, late deceased, for the manors of Kypis and Scales."

In 1251 (35 Henry III.) the king granted to Edmund de Lacy free warren in all his demesne lands in the honor of Pontefract.

Among the "Pleas of Juries and Assizes," dated 1251, we have the following finding :—

> "The Jurors say that John de Lacy, earl of Lincoln and constable of Chester, was wont to have returne of Writt of the lord the King in ye Wappentake aforesaid. They say allso that forreigne marchants coming by water to the towne of Pountfrette were allwayes wont to goe and come free from tol, till that they were hindred by the cittizens of Yorke, who doe not suffer them to goe by water from the towne which is called Ermyne to Pountfrette whence they say this is to the great detriment of the foresaid Towne of Pountfrette, and that the vessels which were wont to goe to Pountfrette by this impediment now goe to Yorke."

From this we infer that a large amount of Pontefract trade passed down the river Aire, and this helps us to account for the large number of "Souters" or watermen, found among the list of Pontefract inhabitants who were assessed in the Poll Tax Rolls of 1379.

In Dodsworth's "Notes," vol. 160, reference is made to a tradition in Pontefract that—

> "King Richard intended to have builded a citty there, and have brought the ryver of Ayre thither, w'ch conjecture is p'bable, for itt is a very fitt place for a citty in my conceit, and would have beene very behovefull for all the west contreys, Notts and Darbishire, &c."

Here Dodsworth probably refers to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who spent much of his time between 1466 and 1483 at Pontefract Castle, in his capacity of Seneschal of the Duchy of Lancaster, and who when he became king gave the burgesses their first Charter of Incorporation, with the grant of a mayor.

In 1257 Edmund de Lacy obtained from the king permission for a weekly market to be held at Tanshelf on Wednesdays, and a summer fair for 3 days at Pontefract, and in the following year he granted to the inhabitants of Westchep, adjoining Tanshelf, the same liberties and customs which his other burgesses of Pontefract had from his ancestors. It would appear that this charter was designed to incorporate the western and eastern portions of the town. The same year, however, this popular lord of Pontefract died.

From an Inquisition taken a few weeks after the death of Edmund de Lacy (28 July 1258) we glean the following particulars :—

> "Ponsfractus :—There were in the town 14 score tofts*, of which 18 are tenantless, and do no service to the lord, and the rest pay 12d. a year.
>
> 78 selde† paying 2d. each, of which 6 are unoccupied ;
>
> 42 selde of cobblers and those who sell salt pay 2d. each.
>
> 60 stalls pay 1d. each. These stand in the open spaces of the town.
>
> 70 acres of land called Plotheland pay 2d. an acre.
>
> A forum (fair) worth £4 a year.
>
> The toll of beasts, iron, wool, hides and skins, worth £30 a year.
>
> The nundine (markets) are worth £12.
>
> The toll of Knottingley is worth 10s.
>
> A certain custom, called Ferthepenyc‡ is worth one marc a year.
>
> The toll of fish and oil each worth 6s. 8d.

---

* A parcel of ground, on part of which stood a house.

† Booths.

‡ This custom is probably equivalent to Frithpenny, i.e., the penny paid to the lords of some manors, by each person within the manor who appeared at the view of the Frankpledge.

The toll of linen-web 5s. ; of building materials, 5s. ; pleas*, 13s. 4d.

The toll of wayde (woad for dyes) 6s. 8d.

11 score and 14 acres and one rood at 4d. an acre worth 78s. ½d.

10 score acres and a half acres in the assarts† of Ponsfractus at 2d. each.

11 score acres of land at Tanesolfe (Tanshelf) in the lord's demesno worth 12d. each.

And there are 26 acres of land which the lord gave to the town of Ponsfractus, in exchange for a certain plot of land, which he gave to the Friars Preachers.

There are 10 cottars and 2 curtilages in Taneselfe worth 10s.

56 acres of meadow in Castelforde in demesne at 3s. an acre.

24 bovates (oxgangs) of land in Karleton and Herdwyke (Hardwick) held in bondage, each containing 15 acres, and paying 4d. an acre. Each bovate ought to work 2 days a week for 47 weeks in the year, each work being worth 3 farthings, and each bovate during the five weeks of harvest ought to work for 6 days, each work being worth 1d. And each bovate of 20 pays 3 fowls at Christmas and 40 eggs at Easter.

And each of 4 bovates pays 2 fowls and 15 eggs.

And each bovate of the 24 ought to plough twice a year, with dinner from the lord once a day, and if no dinner the lord shall give 3d.

A loft in Karleton worth 12d. a year.

9 bovates of land in Herdwyke are held freely of the lord, of which Simon de Herthewyke holds 5 bovates at 6s. 8d., and ought to serve summonses of the court of Ponsfractus with the serjeant of the same, and ought to testify them.

Thomas le Parmenter holds 3 bovates and pays 4s. a year.

Robert Lageman holds one bovate and pays 16d. a year for all service.

The mills of Hastlford (? Castleford) and Cnottingley with the fisheries are worth 40 mares a year.

Henry, the first born son of Eadmund de Lacy, is his next heir, and was of the age of eight yeres on Christmas day 1257." ‡

The number of knight's fees held by the De Lacies numbered fifty-four. Each of these seems to have been of the extent of from 10 to 12 carucates of land, and may be taken, with the "wastes" of the manors, at about 2,000 acres each. The De Lacy estates in Yorkshire alone extended over 110,000 acres, including much of the finest land in the county, as well as the wilder districts on the borders of Lancashire.

The principal object of these inquisitions was of a fiscal

* Profits arising from fines, &c.

† Land cleared of wood and rendered arable.

‡ For a full list of the possessions of Edmund de Lacy see Yorkshire Inquisitions, vol. i., page 51.

nature, for the purpose of ascertaining what amount of revenue could be raised from the particular manor or lordship which was the subject of inquiry; and what feudal services were due from the several descriptions of tenants.

CHAPTER XI.

—o—

"The battled towers, the donjon keep,
The loophole grates where captives weep." *Scott.*

Henry de Lacy (2nd).

Edmund de Lacy died at the early age of thirty. Dugdale states that he died 21 July 1258 and was buried at Stanlow; another record states that his heart was brought to Pontefract and buried in St. Richard's Church which he had founded. From an entry on the Close Roll, it is clear that he died before 18 June 1258, and in Holmes's "Pontefract, its Lords and its Castle" the date is given as 5 June 1258.

He was succeeded by his son and heir Henry de Lacy, a minor. In an Inquisition quoted in our last chapter Edmund's heir was 8 years old on Christmas Day 1257. In an "Extent" made 9 September 1264, before Sir Henry Wallace, seneschal of Pontefract, it is stated that "Henry de Lacy will be 14 years old on the day of Epiphany next." (6 January 1264-5).

He married Margaret, daughter and heiress of William de Longespée, Earl of Salisbury, and Constable of Lincoln Castle; the latter office he appears to have inherited by right of his wife, as we find in the Escheat Roll, 4th Edward I, that Henry de Lacy is there entered as "Constable of the Castle of Lincoln."

Henry de Lacy was greatly trusted by, and filled many important offices under, Edward I. This king on his march to Scotland in 1301 to support the claims of Baliol to the Scottish throne, rested at Pontefract, and here left under the care of

the Friar Preachers, his Queen Margaret. During his absence on this campaign, the queen gave birth to a son at Brotherton Hall, who is known in history as Thomas de Brotherton, the ancester of the ducal House of Norfolk.

The Lazar House.

In 1206, Henry de Lacy built at Pontefract a hospital for lepers. This terrible scourge was an eastern importation by the returned Crusaders. In many of the old churches built or restored during this period may yet be seen the leper's window and hagiscope, or squint, providing facilities for the unfortunate victims of this disease to be present at divine service, without mixing with the rest of the worshippers. Good specimens of this architectural feature still exist in the neighbouring churches of Birkin and Kirk Smeaton.

The Lazarites formed an Order of Regular Friars, the head house of which was at Burton Lazars in Leicestershire. Their house and church at Pontefract, dedicated to St. Michael, was located on the Darrington Road, at the extreme southern point of the township. It is sometimes named in the old records as Foulsnape, and appears under that title in Pope Nicholas' Taxation about 1291. It was under the patronage of St. Nicholas Hospital, as we find from the Inquisition taken at Pontefract 3 October, 1464, where "The jurors say that the Master of the Hospitall of St. Nicholas ought to find one Chaplaine to celebrate ther 4 dayes in a weeke, and 3 dayes at Foulsnape."

Every vestige of both house and church has disappeared. Mr. Holmes suggests that as the leprosy epidemic gradually died out, the Order collapsed, while the sites would become absorbed by some other religious house. At Pontefract the last few survivors appear to have established themselves as members of a Bede House near the castle.

In Holmes's "Black Friars of Pontefract" is quoted the will of a John Bule of the "Hospytall of Saynt Mychaell, of the parish of alhalowes in Pountfrett" (1509), in which are bequests to the church of All Saints, but no mention of the

church of St. Michael, from which we infer that as a religious foundation it had ceased to exist. Nor is there any reference to its existence in the records of the Pontefract religious houses at the suppression of the monasteries in 1538-9, for St. Nicholas Hospital and the Bede House connected with it had previously passed as town charities into the hands of the Mayor and Corporation of Pontefract, and each had thus become a civil foundation.

Henry de Lacy had two sons, both of whom predeceased him. Edmund, the elder, was accidentally drowned in a draw-well at Denbigh Castle (which his father began to build), while the younger, John, is said to have been killed by a fall from the battlements of Pontefract Castle.

During the last three years of his life, Henry de Lacy held the office of Protector of the Realm, the king (Edward II) being a minor.

An inquest was held at Potterlawe,* 2 March, 1307, by command of the king, to ascertain the value of the lands held by the knight Templars in the Wapentakes of Osgoldcross and Barkston, and we find in this valuation list the following items :—

"A capital messuage, with a close and a dovecote, value per		an.,	20s.
160 acres of arable land	,,	,,	80s.
3 acres of meadow	,,	,,	15s.
5 acres of pasture	,,	,,	10s.
40 acres of wood	,,	,,	6s. 8d.

These lands are in the hands of the king, and held by Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, and they also say that the said lands have been bestowed by the ancestors of the said earl for a subsidy of land, of the site of which they are ignorant."

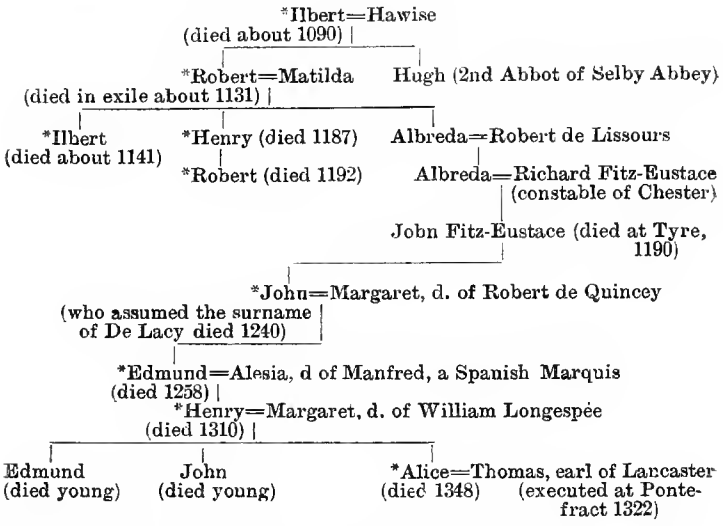
Henry de Lacy died in 1310, at the age of 60 years, and according to Holinshed's Chronicle, his body was buried "in the newe worke of St. Paules, London."

Of his children Alice de Lacy alone survived him, and she proved to be the last of the Pontefract branch of de Lacies. She was married to a scion of the royal house, Thomas, earl of Lancaster, and afterwards, in her right, also earl of Lincoln; thus both the constableship and the fee of the castle of Lincoln

* Potterlawe in Kellington.

became afterwards absorbed in the duchy of Lancaster, and was finally merged in the Crown.

PEDIGREE OF THE PONTEFRACT DE LACIES from 1066 to 1348



* The holders of the Castle and Honor of Pontefract are indicated by an asterisk.

CHAPTER XII.

"Gaoler, look to him;—tell not me of mercy."—*Shakespeare.*

Thomas, Earl of Lancaster.

The death of Henry de Lacy opens out a new era of Pontefract history. His sole surviving child, Alice, was married to Thomas Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster. He was the son of Edmund, the fifth son of Henry III., and thus the nephew of the young King Edward II.

By this marriage Pontefract Castle became the baronial residence of this illustrious but unfortunate nobleman, and for two centuries forward the Lancastrian influence was paramount around this neighbourhood.

Earl Thomas greatly strengthened the fortifications of his castle, and erected the Swillington Tower and the Guard House. His arms (England with a label of three points, charged with fleur de lys) may still be seen on the North Wall. He also added the Great Gateway in the Upper and Lower Barbican Walls.

This powerful earl was from the first opposed to the weak policy of Edward II., who allowed himself to be guided by equally weak and incapable favourites. According to Holinshed's Chronicles, Henry de Lacy, "lyeing on his death bed," obtained a promise from his son-in-law to oppose the king's advisers, and that he "shuld stond with the other lordes in defence of the commonwelth, and maintaine his quarrell

againste the earle of Cornewall, which request earle Thomas faithfullie accomplished."

Earl Thomas actively opposed the worthless Gaveston, earl of Cornwall, the king's favourite; and Gaveston, who regarded Lancaster as his mortal enemy, would gladly have encompassed his death. Baker's Chronicle gives us a glance of the mutual animosity of these opposing nobles. A knight was one day seized as he was passing by Pontefract with a packet of letters directed to the king of Scotland. On examination these were found to contain the concerting of a plot for the murder of Lancaster; the luckless messenger was promptly executed, and his head set upon one of the turrets of the castle.

Lancaster's Rebellion.

In conjunction with other nobles, Lancaster was instrumental in the beheading of Gaveston as a public enemy, and thus further incurred the enmity of the king. He as strongly opposed the De Spencers,* whom the king next took into his favour.

Lancaster set up his standard at Sherburn in 1321, swearing not to disband his followers until he had utterly destroyed the power and influence of the De Spencers.

The enraged king at once marched an army to the north, and seized Pontefract Castle. Sending forward his forces under the earls of Kent and Surrey, they encountered the rebels near Boroughbridge, and inflicted upon them a severe defeat. Lancaster and several other men of influence were captured and conveyed to Pontefract Castle, where they were adjudged by the king and a few peers there assembled, to be hanged as traitors. The king, however, in Thomas Lancaster's case, out of reverence to his high lineage, commuted his sentence to beheading. Walsingham, the monkish chronicler, says—

"Then Thomas Lancaster sayd—'Shaul I dy withoute answer?' but a certayne Gascoyne toke hym away, and put a pillid broken hatte

* The De Spencers owned the manor of Parlington, some 8 miles north of Pontefract.

or hoode on his hedde, and set hym on a lene whyte jade without bridil, and he cryd thus, 'Kyng of Heven, have mercie on me, for the kyng of he urth has none.' Thus he was caryd, having a fere preacher for his confessor withe hym, on to a hylle withoute the toune, wher he knelid down, his face towarde Scotlande, and a villayne of London cut off his hedde, ii. Kal. Aprilis 1321."

Thus fell Thomas the once powerful earl of Lancaster.

St. Thomas Hill.

The execution took place on a site since known as St. Thomas Hill, lying to the north of Pontefract Castle, overlooking Ferrybridge. It is named in the monastic charters of Pontefract "the Thieves' Gallows, near St. Ralph's Cross," from which we infer that the spot had been an ancient place of execution long before Lancaster was beheaded. St. Ralph's Cross was probably what is now known as "Stump Cross," the base of which still remains, and forms a boundary stone between Pontefract and Ferrybridge.

The decapitated body of earl Thomas was buried in the church of St. John Priory at Pontefract; according to Leland's account, "the Prior and Monkes required his hodie, and got it of the King, and buryed it on the right hond of the Hy Altare."

The tragic death of this noble was deeply deplored, and his memory long venerated by the common people, who regarded him as a martyr in the cause of liberty. Crowds made pilgrimages to worship at his tomb, and on the hill where he suffered. Though never canonized by the church, he yet was spoken of as "St. Thomas," and miracles, according to the fashion of those times, were said to have been performed at his tomb, which so displeased the king, that he issued a command that "an immediate restraint be put upon the people to prevent such doings in future."

Leland (1525), referring to the Chronicles of Walsingham, says—

"Here followid a chapitre of the miracles that men sayde that God wroughte for Thomas a Lancastre. And for resorte of the people to the monte wher Thomas was beheded, Baldok the chauncelar, caussid xiii Gascoynes, welle armid, to watch the hille a certem time."

Hollinshead, who cites as his authority Nicholas Trivet, a contemporary historian, gives a similar version—

> "Certaine miracles which were said to be doone neare the place, both where he suffered, and where he was buryed, caused manie to thinke he was a saint; howbeit, at length, by the king's comandement, the churche doores of the priore where he was buried were shut and closed, so that no man might be suffered to come to the toome to bring any offerings, or to doo any other kind of devotion to the same. Also, the hille where he suffered was kepid by certeine Gascoines, appointed by the lord Hugh Spencer, the sonne, then lying at Pomfrette Castle, to the end that no peopl shuld come and make their praiers thers in worshipp of the saide earle, whome they looke veralie for a martyr."

In his "Baronage of England," Dugdale, speaking of earl Thomas, says—

> "Touching his merits, there happened afterwards very great disputes, some thinking it fit that he should be accounted a saint, because he was so charitable, and so much an honorer of the Religions, as also that he died in a just cause; but chiefly for that his persecutors came to untimely ends a short time afterwards. Nevertheless many miracles were reported to have been afterwards wrought in the place where his corpse was buried, much confluence of people coming thereto in honour thereof, until a church was erected on the place where he suffered. Most certain it is, the vulgar sort of people had so great a veneration to him that they worshipped his Picture which (with other) was drawn on a Tablet in Saint Paul's Church at London. On the morrow after the Feast of the Epiphany, it was generally believed that miracles were done at his Tomb, and that blood issued out of it."

In 1822, exactly 500 years after the execution of earl Thomas of Lancaster, as two labourers were trenching the land for liquorice-beds in Paper Mill Garth, Spital Hardwick, near St. Thomas Hill, one of them struck his spade against a rocky substance, which on investigation proved to be a huge rough-hewn stone coffin. When the massive lid was removed, the coffin was found to contain, in excellent preservation, the decapitated skeleton of a man of great stature. The skull was lying between the thigh bones, and a stone occupied the place where the skull would have been in an undecapitated skeleton. There were good reasons to assume that these were the remains of Thomas Lancaster, though the question is open to doubt. The Milnes family, upon whose estate this relic was found, had the skeleton carefully placed in a wooden coffin cased with

zinc, and then deposited in the original stone coffin, which was removed to the private grounds at Fryston Hall, where they still may be seen by the curious. *

On a recent visit to this place, we carefully examined this interesting relic of mediæval times. On lifting a loose triangular part of the stone lid, the inner coffin is plainly visible.

The question arises, 'Are these the remains of earl Thomas?' Now we have it stated by contemporary chroniclers that the body of the earl was granted to the monks, who buried it near the altar in the Church of St. John the Evangelist at Pontefract, yet the stone coffin supposed to contain his remains was discovered half a mile away from Monkhill, the site of the Pontefract monastery.

One ingenious antiquary argues that the belief in the miracles referred to would doubtless prove a source of revenue to the monks, who would esteem the possession of his remains a great privilege. On that account they might be anxious, on the threatened dissolution of their house, to preserve them from desecration, and so had them removed secretly to the secluded spot where they were discovered in 1822, in the hope of future restoration, for such hopes were cherished long after the dissolution of the monasteries. The fact of the coffin being only some twelve inches below the surface is evidence of hasty interment. The rough unlettered stone coffin is no evidence against the supposition of its being the depository of the earl's body, as the "storied urn" would no doubt be the mausoleum placed over his grave in the church. The whole subject, however, is, and we fear must remain, conjectural.

The Chantry of St. Thomas.

On the spot where the execution of the earl took place, there was afterwards founded the Chantry of St. Thomas, which is described by ancient writers as presenting an appearance of grandeur, and containing monuments to the memory of St.

* As these pages are passing through the Press, certain Pontefract gentlemen are approaching Earl Crewe, the owner of Fryston, with the object of securing this relic for the town's Museum; we trust their efforts will be successful.—L. P.

Edmund and Thomas de Brotherton. The chantry was destroyed soon after the dissolution of the Religious Houses, but its name has been affixed to the site, and to the windmill erected thereon.

The last remaining relics of this chantry were ploughed up in 1843, and may now be seen in the grounds of St. Catherine, the residence of Robert D. Ryder, Esq., J.P., at Pontefract. They include the old font, carved figures of grotesque heads, quaintly carved gargoyles, aud other stones bearing well-preserved traces of ecclesiastical sculpture.

The last of the De Lacies.

Four years after the death of Thomas Lancaster, his lady, Alice De Lacy, married one of her many paramours, and, taking this step without the consent of the king, all her lands in Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire were confiscated.

Touching Alice De Lacy, it is said that divers years before the death of Thomas Lancaster, she was repudiated. The story, as related by Walsingham, stamps the Countess as a disreputable character. She survived the Earl some twenty-six years. Though twice married after the death of Lancaster, she died childless, in comparative obscurity, and with her death, in 1348, ended the illustrious line of the Pontefract branch of the De Lacy race.

CHAPTER XIII.

———o———

"Mark the year, and mark the night
When Severn shall re-echo with affright;
The shrieks of death, through Berkley's roof tha ring,
Shrieks of an agonising king."—*Gray.*

Henry Earl of Lincoln.

After the death of Earl Thomas, the king, setting aside the will of his fallen enemy, who had bequeathed his estates to his brother Henry, held the castle and honor of Pontefract in his own hands, and appointed the elder De Spencer as "defender of the honor." In the king's hands it remained until his own deposition and subsequent murder at Berkeley Castle in 1327.

In the first Parliament of Edward III., Henry, earl of Lincoln, obtained an act reversing his brother's attainder, and in addition to the splendid patrimony of his family, inherited the castle and honor of Pontefract.

An Escheat of 1328 records that the king granted to "Robert de Wodehous, keeper of the hospital of St. Nicholas, free warren in all his demesne lands of Methley, Castilford, Hoghton and Hertewick in the Countie of Yorke."

St. Ive's Well.

'Hertewick' refers to Spital Hardwick, the distinctive title of "Spital" being derived from its having been a possession of St. Nicholas Hospital in Pre-Norman Times. There are evidences that Spital Hard-

wick was the seat of an old civilization, for Roman remains have frequently been unearthed there in quite modern times. The most interesting feature on its site at the present time is St. Ive's well, to which we have been unable to attach any documentary record, but its ancient name tends to the surmise that the place was the site of one of the many religious communities founded by St. Hiva.

This Well lies in a small dell located near the old Pontefract and Castleford Road. Its position near this ancient road recalls the account of the Venerable Bede as to the practice in his times of establishing such wells for the use of wayfarers. It is fairly certain that this particular Well has been in existence for more than a thousand years, and many eminent antiquaries agree in connecting it with St. Hiva, or Heiu, the predecessor of St. Hilda of Hartlepool, who in the early times of the establishment of Christianity in the north, exercised a widespread influence throughout Northumbria. Healaugh, near Tadcaster, St. Ives near Bingley, and Ivegate at Bradford are topographical instances. There are other wells in the neighbourhood of Pontefract, which, judging from their names, were, according to the fashion of early times, accounted to possess sacred virtues, *e.g.*, Holy Well at Glasshoughton, and "Halliwell," located at Tanshelf.

Henry, Duke of Lancaster.

Resuming our account of the Pontefract lords, we note that Henry, earl of Lincoln, filled the office of High Steward of England, and was otherwise greatly trusted by Edward III. He was also joint commander with the earl of Kent in the Scottish expedition having for its objective the support of Baliol, who was in imminent danger of losing his much-disputed authority. Earl Henry died in 1346, when the castle and honor of Pontefract passed into the hands of his son Henry, whom the king subsequently created Duke of Lancaster, this being the first dukedom created since the Norman Conquest, with the solitary exception of the Black Prince, who was created duke of Cornwall by royal charter, dated from Pontefract, 18 March 1332.

We find no records of local interest relating to this first Duke of Lancaster. He died without issue male in 1361; of his two daughters, Maud and Blanche, the latter was married to her cousin John of Gaunt (or Ghent, from his having been born at that Flemish town). Maud died childless a few months after her father, and the whole of the Pontefract fee devolved to Blanche.

Escheat of 1361-2.

Inquisition taken 35th Edward III, before William de Resfeild, Escheator of the lorde ye king in ye cittie of Yorke. The jurors say upon their oath, that Henry, late Duke of Lancaster, held the day that he died the towne and honnr of Pontfrct, together with the mannrs, lands and tenements, fees and advowsons, and all other to the foresaid towne and Honr belonging, with the appurtenances in the countie of Yorke in forme underwritten . . . . . And there is at Pontfret a certaine castle to which the honr of Pontfret with the towne belongeth, together with the mannrs and members and appurtenances underwritten, viz., Bradford, Almanbury, Leedes, Berewyke, Roundlay, Scoles, Kipis, Allertone, Rothwelle, Altofts, Warmfield, Beghall, with all other appurtenances in the foresaid honr . . . .

John O Gaunt, by right of his wife, now became the new lord of Pontefract, and received by royal charter, dated 14 July 1364, a confirmation of all the privileges which his father-in-law had had before him.

From this year 1361 dates the founding of the chantry on St. Thomas Hill by one Simond Symeon*, in memory of earl Thomas executed on the spot 39 years before.

John o Gaunt duke of Lancaster.

Pontefract Castle appears to have been a favourite residence of the great John o Gaunt, "Time-honoured Lancaster." Ambitious from a youth, closely allied to the royal house, and the richest noble in the realm, he wielded during his strenuous life great power and influence, and thus played an important part in the history of his times. In addition to the dukedom of Lancaster, he received the titles of earl of Leicester, Lincoln and Derby. Could an exact list be formed of the castles that belonged to him, the number might excite surprise. Besides the castillated mansions of various sizes, with which most of his manors and towns were furnished, the following castles are distinctly specified as appertaining to

* See Dugdale's "Baronage."

him:—Pontefract, Pickering, Knaresborough, Lancaster, Kenilworth, Tutbury, Pevensy, Lydel, Dunstanborough, Hertford, Bolingbroke and Monmouth.*

He embarked in prolonged campaigns on the continent, and, on the retirement of the Black Prince, assumed the command of the English armies in France, in those wars which were yearly draining the resources of the realm. It was during his absence on these foreign expeditions that his wife Blanche died, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.

By his second marriage in 1372 with Constance, the daughter of Peter the Cruel, this lord of Pontefract actually became the king of Castile and Leon, whose arms he assumed. On the demise of Edward III in 1377, he was appointed guardian of the youthful Richard II., and thus practically managed the affairs of governance.

An Ancient Rent List.

One of the earliest documents extant relative to the rental of lands in and around Pontefract dates from the time of John o Gaunt, of which the following is an extract:—

"At the anniversarie institution of the wapontak of Osgodcrosse held at Grey-stones yn Novembre 1368, John Clark of Pontfract with Fliodell Greene, took to farme the bailiwiek of Pontfract with the rent of the farme called burgess farme, the tol of the markets and faires, the issue of the court at Scabell-brigg, one bakehouse, the keeping of the prison, and all other profits for six yeares, paieing yearlie xviijli; the milne at Castilforth and piscarie (fishery) paieing vili; the milne at Knottyngley and piscorie paieing xxiiili yerely."

The following year John Clark applied for an abatement of The yearlie rent, but yt was not granted, as Thomas Elys gave xxviili for it, besides wieh the milne of Castilforth lett to Thomas Wrangbroke for viijli, and the milne at Knottyngley lett for xxvijli. Signed William Finehden, Senesehal.

* See Hunter's "South Yorkshire."

CHAPTER XIV.

—o—

"When Adam delved, and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman."—*John Ball.*

Richard II.

During the early years of the reign of Richard II., the conduct of foreign affairs was chiefly vested in the hands of John o Gaunt. The campaigns on the continent had left this nation burdened with debt, so that money was urgently needed to restore the credit of the government, and hence in 1378-9 a poll-tax was imposed, whereby every person above the age of sixteen, excepting notorious mendicants, was assessed according to his or her state and degree, from dukes who paid £6 13s. 4d. to agricultural labourers who paid 4d.

From the list of Pontefract families who contributed to this war tax, as recorded in the subsidy Rolls, a fair idea of the population of the town at that period may be ascertained. Not only are these returns valuable as a census of the town, but they furnish us with the actual names of the townsmen; if married the name of the wife is recorded (for married couples counted as one in the assessment), and in the case of all above the grade of labourers, the trades or callings of each individual is recorded. Coming in as they do, long before the Parish Registers were instituted, and reporting not only the names and condition of the larger landowners, but also of the yeomen, tradesmen and peasants, these Subsidy Rolls give us

a most valuable side-light of the common life in the different local centres over 500 years ago.

A comparison with the published lists of other West Riding towns, clearly proves that Pontefract during the 14th century was much more populous than either Leeds, Bradford or Halifax ; in fact Pontefract, Doncaster, Selby and Sheffield were in 1379 the four chief centres of population in the Riding.

Poll-Tax Returns for Pontefract.

We find from these Rolls that in Pontefract there were 608 assessed persons, of whom 488 paid 4d. ; 75 paid 6d. ; 28 paid 1s. ; 7 paid 2s. ; 6 paid 3s. 4d. ; and 4 paid 6s. 8d. Of the value of money at that period some idea may be formed from the fact, that the ordinary rate of wages was a penny a day.

The 4 who paid at the rate of 6/8 were :

William Baylay (merchant) and Johanna, his wife
John Gayton ,, and Margaret
Robert de Beal (draper) and Magota
Thomas Elys (sergeant) and Joan

The 6 who paid at the rate of 3/4 were :

William Boteler (osteler)*a* and Cecilia
William de Karleyl (osteler) and Alice
John Roller (merchant) and Agnes
John de Balne (lister)*b* and Emma
John Clerk (franklin) and Johanna
John de Elmesall (mercer) and Joan

The 7 who paid at the rate of 2/- were :

Thomas Bollay (cattle-dealer) and Matilda
William de Tanshelf (barker)*c* and Alice
Adam Holman (merchant) and Isabella
Adam Vause ,, and Margaret
John Tankerloy ,, and Matilda
Nicholas Fletcher (cattle-dealer) and Agnes
John Spicer (draper) and Alice

The 28 who paid at the rate of 1/- were :

John Clerk (mason) and Agnes
Thomas de ffenton (skinner) and Alice
Adam Kypas ,,

a Hotel-keeper. *b* Dyer. *c* Tanner.

William de Parlyngton (skinner) and Constance
Nicholas de Galtris ,, and Alice
Robert ffermyn ,,
Thomas Wakefeld (lyster)*d* and Joan
John de Kyghlay (cutler)
John de Hyperon (cattle-dealer) and Emma
Thomas Carter ,, and Joan
Henry de Walton ,, and Annabella
John Doram (hotel-keeper) and Magota
William Mitton ,, and Alice
John Galway ,, and Alice
Robert Pleghman ,, and Joan
Robert Spycer (spicer)*e* and Joan
Thomas Marchall (smith) and Julia
Thomas de Garton (draper) and Magota
Robert Latewys ,, and Margaret
Adam Chaloner (overlid-maker) and Agnes
John fforester (flescher)*f* and Isabella
John Barbour (barker)*g* and Cecilia
William Waykfeld (barker) and Joan
John Bank (sadler) and Alice
John Catelyn (pardoner)*h* and Joan
John Queldryk ,, and Joan
John Ebor (bawer)*i* and Alice
John de Bothes (marschall)*j* and Alice

The 75 who paid at the rate of 6d. were:

Robert Chaloner (webster)*k* and Beatrice
Peter Walkar ,, and Joan
John Webster ,, and Alice
Adam Hallestede ,, and Alice
William de Dunforth ,, and Joan
William Webester ,, and Margaret
Joan Strafford ,,
Emma Bele ,,
Precious Scherwynd ,,
Robert Webester (webster) and Margaret
William Webester ,, and Margaret
Thomas Taillour ,, and Alice
John de Methlay (tailor) and Cecilia
John de Pathorn ,, and Alice
William Baughtwer ,, and Alice
Robert Horbery ,, and Joan
John de Methlay ,, and Joan
John de Radclyff ,, and Joan
John de Grete ,, and Agnes

d Dyer. *e* Grocer. *f* Butcher. *g* Tanner.
h Seller of papal indulgencies. *i* Worker in Wood.
j Bailiff. *k* Weaver.

John de ffery (tailor) and Alice
John Sagher ,, and Hawyse
Robert de Pytte ,, and Joan
John de Whytlay ,, and Emma
Henry Smyth (smith)
John Yarom ,, and Alice
Robert de Whythay ,, and Matilda
Hugo de ffriston ,, and Anna
Robert Busby ,, and Eden
John de Mydsak ,, and Isabella
John de Naton ,, and Magota
William ffraunses ,, and Alice
John Smyth ,, and Isabella
Richard Deryng (souter)*l* and Alice
Robert Cudworth ,, and Joan
William deNorthfolk ,, and Alice
John de ffery ,, and Joan
John Whytebull ,, and Alice
Thomas Whyte ,, and Helen
William de Thorp ,, and Constance
Elias Tewar ,,
William de Kyrke ,, and Margaret
Richard Pepperoorne (spicer)*m* and Alice
John de Thornton ,, and Constance
Richard Spycer ,, and Alice
William Spycer ,,
Thomas Scherwynd (taverner)
Robert de Marbery ,, and Dionisia
Nicholas Warwyk ,, and Emma
Peter Baylle ,, and Joan
William Milner (walker)*n* and Alice
Thomas Benet ,, and Matilda
Thomas de Haddeslay ,, and Alice
William Roger ,,
William Flynt ,, and Annotte
John de More, (sadler) and Matilda
John Essohewr ,, and Margaret
John Sadelar ,,
Richard Acworth (wright) and Alice
Randolph Chapman ,, and Cecilia
John de Knottynglay (draper)
Richard Bailye ,, and Alice
William Garlekar (undescribed) and Alice
Robert Schaksper (cooper) and Emma
Thomas Chaloner ,, and Johanna
John Munkman (tanner) and Agnes
Hugo Barker ,, and Joan
Adam Karlele (bawer) and Joan

l Ferryman & Boatman. *m* Grocer. *n* Cloth Fuller.

John Denerell (bawer) and Agnes
John de Saxton (barber) and Isabella
John de Roche ,, and Constance
Robert Lyster (lyster) and Emmot
Reginald Brandon (lyster) and Agnes
John de Aston (rope-maker) and Agnes
Thomas Tayllour (sizer)
John Plasterer (baker) and Agnes

Of the rest who paid 4d. (comprising small householders, peasants, labourers, servants and youths over 16 years of age), 197 were married householders, and the remainder single persons. "Summa Totalis Ponteffrat xiiijli. viijs. xd. (£14 8s. 10d.)

The Peasants' Revolt.

A spirit of insubordination and discontent now began to manifest itself among the labouring classes, which the tyrannical manner of collecting this odious poll tax ripened into open rebellion. The Peasants' Revolt headed by Wat Tyler broke out in Kent. The lord of Pontefract especially became unpopular at this time; "the insurgents," says Holinshed's Chronicle, "were animated with the envy which they bore to the duke of Lancaster, John o Gaunt." The torrent, gaining strength as it swept along, rushed onwards with overpowering force to London, where the duke's splendid palace in the Savoy fell a sacrifice to the hatred of the mob. Well aware that he had many enemies, and that the young king already viewed with a jealous eye his vast wealth and influence, he withdrew to the north, and entrenched himself in his strong castle of Pontefract, with a large body of his retainers. Despite all his varying fortunes, however, he continued one of the most powerful nobles in the realm until his death in 1399.

The Hermitage.

In 1386 a Hermitage was founded at Pontefract by Adam de Laythorpe, on a site now occupied by the Dispensary in Southgate. Thomas Gent, in his "Comprehensive Dissertation on Pontefract," already referred to, says :—

"Within this town is a remarkable curiosity. Tis a cave in the garden of Mr. John Marsden, which has been with great labour cut

out of a fine and solid rock. Over the door are these letters remaining D I T I S."

An Oratory to which the steps down to this cave lead, was added about the year 1433, but appears to have been so thoroughly covered from view about the time of the Reformation, that for three centuries its very existence was forgotton, until Mr. Fox, the historian of Pontefract was enabled early in the 19th century to transcribe certain old deeds which demonstrated that it certainly once existed.

In 1854 by a mere accident its roof was broken into by some drainage excavators, and in 1869 an entrance from an adjacent garden was made into the ancient Oratory.

The following are extracts from the ancient deeds which Mr. Fox transcribed :—

"Robert de Laythorpe gives to brother Adam, the hermit, for life, a place for a hermitage, extending to the mansion of the friar preachers, and betwixt the lands of William Stone on the east, and the curtilage that John Naylor held on the west. Witnessed by John Clerke, bailiff of Pontefract, John de Sampal, Adam Enys. Dated 9th Richard II, 1386."

"Henry Manys, of Pontefract, and Margery, his wife, and Joan Laythorpe, sister of Margery, give to William Porlyngton, a tenement for an hermitage for his life in the venell leading from Malfaygate to the mansion of the friar preachers, betwixt the gardens of Thomas Elys . . . . to build an hermitage upon. Witnesses :—John Hippon and William Wakefield, bailiffs of Pontefract." Dated 7th Henry IV.

"Robert Elys of Everingham, gentleman, gives to John Hudyrfield, prior of Rosevelle, all his right in a tenement called the hermitage in Pontefract . . . . witnesses, Robert Flemyng, John Burton, Thomas Challoner." Dated 9th Henry IV.

From a study of the deeds transcribed by Mr. Fox, we learn that an Adam de Laythorpe began the Hermitage in 1386 ; that after his death his son Robert inherited and gave it to his brother Adam the hermit for life, and that at Robert's death the place passed to his coheiresses Margery and Joan, of whom the elder had married Henry Manys (1405), and presented to the benefice ; and that by 1417 she was married a second time to John Fenton, but had died or parted with the property in 1420.

The presentations to the Hermitage by its successive owners were :—

(1) 1386 to Adam the hermit, by Robert de Laythorpe.

(2) 1405 to William Porlyngton by Henry Manys, Margery his wife, and Joan her sister.

(3) 1417 to John Lound, chaplain of York, by John Fenton and Margery his wife, and Joan her sister.

(4) 1420 to Henry Lacy, chaplain, by Joan, daughter and heiress of Robert Laythorpe.

(5) 1430 to John Hudyrfield by Robert Elys of Everingham.

CHAPTER XV.

———o———

"That hand shall burn in never-quenching fire
That staggers thus my person,—Exton, thy fierce hand
Hath with the king's blood stain'd the king's own land."

Shakespeare.

The year before the old John o Gaunt died, the king, jealous of the enormous influence wielded by this powerful subject, and fearful lest his ambitious son and heir, Henry of Bolingbroke, should entertain designs upon the crown, seized upon a quarrel between Bolingbroke and Norfolk as a pretext for banishing the former from the realm for a period of ten years.

John o Gaunt appears to have silently acquiesced in this sentence ; age had probably quenched that fiery spirit which had been wont to blaze forth upon the slightest provocation, though his tacit approval of a sentence which threatened to separate him for ever from the heir of his illustrious house, afterwards gave occasion to Bolingbroke's enemies to affirm that his father had advised and sanctioned the measure.

The character of Bolingbroke was not above reproach, but the sentence meted out to him by the king was received with disfavour by the people at large. He quitted the kingdom during his father's lifetime, under circumstances which could not fail to excite the most painful sentiments in the minds of the nobles, who saw in this daring attack upon a scion of the

royal house, a system of despotism which precipitated the ruin of the king, already unpopular from his arbitrary methods of government.

Death of John o Gaunt.

A few months after Bolingbroke had left the country, the great duke of Lancaster died, when the king at once seized upon his vast possessions, and even prohibited his heir from claiming his father's title.

The king's nearest kinsman and heir at this time was Roger, earl of March, the grandson of Lionel, elder brother of John o Gaunt. The earl had been entrusted with the government of Ireland, where he was slain in a skirmish with some Irish rebels. The king resolved to go over to Ireland in order to crush this rebellion, but no sooner had he quitted England than the barons began openly to murmur at the king's arbitrary rule, while just at this critical moment Bolingbroke landed unexpectedly at Ravenspur in Yorkshire to claim his heritage, and was immediately joined by many of the northern lords. Bolingbroke declared that he only came to assert his claim to the Duchy of Lancaster, and had no designs of stirring up a rebellion against Richard. When the news reached the king he at once left Ireland, but on landing in North Wales found himself deserted by his troops and took refuge in Conway Castle, where he was seized by Northumberland and other lords, and conveyed a prisoner to London.

The King deposed.

The proud moment of triumph in the House of Lancaster had now arrived. Richard II. had outlived the love of his subjects, and many who would have resisted the usurpation of John o Gaunt, followed his ambitious son with shouts and blessings. Bolingbroke saw how strongly the tide of popularity ran in his favour; the public voice called him to the throne, and he was not slow in obeying its summons. On the 29th September, 1399, Richard was forced by threats to abdicate, and Bolingbroke, duke of Lancaster and lord of Pontefract, was proclaimed King Henry IV.

Murder of Richard II.

The deposed monarch was now hurried from prison to prison, and eventually arrived at Pontefract Castle, where he was murdered. The details of this dark act have never come to light. The general account of contemporary chroniclers is that he was killed by Sir Piers Exton and his associates, who had been despatched for that purpose by the new king. Thomas Walsingham, the monkish historian of Evesham, relates that Richard voluntarily starved himself to death in his prison at Pontefract, while another version is that his starvation was not voluntary. The Percies afterwards accused Henry IV. of having caused Richard to perish from hunger, and Archbishop Scrope repeats the same charge. Shakespeare makes Bolingbroke to say, when charged with instigating this crime :—

> "I'll make a voyage to the Holy Land,
> To wash this blood from off my guilty hand." *

Richard's dead body was conveyed from Pontefract to London, and the report circulated that he had died a natural death. The public examination of all those persons about Pontefract Castle, or who had had the immediate custody of the prisoner, would have placed the question at rest for ever, and it must be said that, in rejecting this mode of exculpation, Henry compromised his own reputation, and that the exact manner of Richard's death must still remain a doubt upon the mind of the most diligent inquirer after truth.

The following extract is taken from an old rhyming chronicle of the period :—

> "The kyng then sent kyng Richarde to Leedis,
> Ther to bee kept surely in previte :
> From thens after to Pykeryng went he needis,
> And to Knaresburgh after led was he,
> But to Pauntfrete last, wher he did de." †

Henry IV.

The House of Lancaster had now attained the full plenitude of power to which its aspirations for so long a period were supposed to have been directed. The lord of "old Pomfret" was now

* See Appendix E. † From Hardinge's Chronicle.

seated on the throne of England, yet there remained a competitor in the person of the young earl of March, whose father had recently been slain in Ireland, and who, notwithstanding his youth and apparent obscurity, was the primary cause of a rebellion which shook the foundations of the new dynasty.

First came the rebellion of the Percies, and afterwards the revolt headed by Archbishop Scrope, which was terminated by the defeat of the insurgents near Bramham Moor in 1405. The prelate was taken prisoner and brought before the king at his Castle of Pontefract, and thence carried to Bishopthorpe, where he was condemned as a rebel and there beheaded.

This insurrection, like every other unsuccessful rebellion, contributed to ensure the stability and strength of the government it was intended to destroy. Henceforward Henry IV. was firmly seated on the throne, though many of the nobles continued secretly to regard him as a usurper, and the infant son of the earl of March as the rightful heir ; indeed, it might almost be said that the "Wars of the Roses," the long-continued strife of the two great factions who adhered, the one to the House of Lancaster, and the other to the House of York, and which was destined to render England one wide battle-field, began on Henry's accession.

Henry V.

Henry IV. died in 1413, unregretted by his subjects, yet the House of Lancaster was so securely established that his eldest son succeeded him without a single voice being raised in favour of the earl of March, a circumstance the more remarkable since the wild follies of "Harry of Monmouth's" early days had filled the nation with mistrust of a prince who, to a soldier's desperate valour, added a lawless devotion to low company. The scenes in Eastcheap, so faithfully delineated by Shakespeare from the old chronicles of the period, are familiar to every reader.

We have met with no record of Henry V. having ever paid a royal visit to his ancestral Castle of Pontefract. During the later years of his father's reign, and the whole of the

reign of Henry V., the castle appears to have been chiefly used as a State prison. Prince James of Scotland spent a portion of his nineteen years' imprisonment here, and Charles, duke of Orleans, taken at Agincourt, was also a prisoner in this fortress from 1417 to 1430, prior to his removal to the Tower of London.

Ancient Notices.

From among the ancient notices of those times, we select the following :—(1) Henry V. soon after he came to the throne, confirmed to the town of Pontefract, and to its various religious foundations, all the privileges they had previously enjoyed, and created a Duchy Court of the House of Lancaster, in order to specially distinguish those possessions from the estate of the Crown.

(2) In the "Augmentation Office" appears a release in fee from

> "Peter Baille of Pomfrete to William Douke, vicar of the church of Pomfrete, John de Newthorpe, Roger de Hackworth, John de Harpeswell, and John Marchande de Ferribrigg, chaplaines of lands, tenements, rents and services in the townes of Pomfrette, Wentbrigg and Thorp Hamelyne."

This document is dated at Pontefract, 1387, and witnessed by Thomas Elys, William Baglay, Thomas Maunsell, Henry de Bubwith, Robert Fang, and William de Thorp-Hamelyne.

(3) Under date 1403 we note—

> "Thomas Stonor de Pontfract, John Queldriek, John Pighorn and John Catelyne, took of Robert Waterton, senesehall, to farme the bailiwick, and the privilege of earryinge the rod (i.e. the white staff of the sheriff) together with the rents and farme, the common bakehouse, keepinge of the prison, and faldage within the manour of Tanshel; in time of the faires all tols, stals of the fyshe, with the perquisites of the courte for 3 yeares, paieing lxviiijli (£68); for carryinge the rod iili (£2): and for the common bakehouse xlvjs viijd (£2 6s. 8d.)"

(4) Under date 1443 Robert Methlay of Pontefract, fishmonger. left by his will 6s 8d to the "Feres of St. Richarde at Pomfrette."

1446. Matilda, Countess of Cambridge, bequeaths 6s 8d to the "Frears of Pomfrette."

1451. John de Baghill of Pontefract bequeathed "to the feres preachers of St. Richarde 6s 8d. His widow who survived him 36 years, by her will dated 16 August 1486 (proved 4 May 1487) bequeaths 10s to the church of St. Richard at Pontefract."

The following list of rents is copied from a mass of ancient manuscripts, originally collected hy a Dr. Johnson of Pontefract, and which afterwards came into the possession of Richard Frank, Esq., of Campsall, who seems to have meditated the publication of a Topographical History of the West Riding, for which purpose he transcribed a large collection of miscellaneous information respecting the various townships which compose the Riding. He died in 1769, leaving his prospective history unwritten. The "Frank M.SS" are now deposited in the library of Campsall—a monument of his industry, and a mine of information for antiquaries.

The extracts here quoted are from a M.S. dated 1425, entitled "Rentes of Assyse, Free Tennants and Natives of Tanshell, Karlton and West Harwicke, &c."

"Nineteine oxgangs in Karlton paie xijs vijd,
Four oxgangs with theire works and customes lvijs viijd,
Other small rents in Karlton xxxvjd
fiftee-five oxgangs in Medelay with the worke of the tennants is.
twentie oxgangs in Hoghton, 15 oxgangs in Castilford, and thertie-five oxgangs in Ledston, with the mowinge, makeinge and carrienge the lord's haye and corne, for the mess'ge and tenements of the mastre of the hospittall of Saint Nicholas, with theyre inclosm in the parke of Pontfract, released to them in alle xvli xvjs. iid.

The farme of xls for the fullinge milne atte Castilford, and a littel howse callid Fullect, alle at the reparashon of the tennant, owte of the wode and brushe-wode of the lorde. And the lorde shal kepe in repare the milne-dam and baye and close, at hys propper costes.

For the site of the capital howse ther vis, and for the waste landes, and for the mynes of marle viis, savinge for the farmer of the village of Pontfract, the easements for the faires held yearlie on the vigel of S. Trinity, and for the imparkeing of the bestes gysted in the parke of Pontfract, and dryven ther att the feste of S. Michael, as well as the fallage (foliage) ther, nothing. The fullinge milne in the thyrde yere of the raigne of Richard the Second, lett for xvjs viijd, but now nothing for the defect of the same arose.

For the farm of Nicholas Walker, upon the bankes of the ryver Eyre, over anent the milne iiid.

For the farm of a garden called Appleyard xiiis iiid.

For the croppes of 10 acres of meddowe in north milne holmes, lett to the tennants of Kypas xvis viiid.

For the farme in south milne felde xviiis iid, for everie acre xxd and no more for the greate increase of water.

For the croppe of 12 acres xlvs, and for the croppe of 3 acres

buttinge upon the bankes of the ryver Eyre for the provost (park-keeper) of Kypas and for the deere in the parke xvs.

Of the prior of S. John the Evangelist, for the croppe of one acre in Ledston Thorn vs; for the croppe of 6 acres in Long-aeres xxiiiis, which used to be xxxs.

For the gystment of cattel belonginge to the fortresse of Pontfract in the parke duringe the somer lxvijd.

For boughes cutte down for the manetenance of the deere in the parke at Pontefract xiiili xjs.

For the croppe of grass, wode and barke of oakes felled or blowne doun viiili.

Of the marle pits this yere nothing.

For the farm of the pastur of one close within the parke xxijs.

Perquisites of the court xlvijs viijd.

Out of these rents were paid—

To the provost vis.

Given to the dene of S. Clement within the castell for hys tythes xxjs.

To the mastre of the hospitall of S. Nicholas in Pontefract xiiijd viiijd.

Wages paied to a wowan for washynge the napkyns and towells for the servaunts of the kyng iijd.

For 15 wain lode of wode owt of Pontfract More for the use of the kyng's auditor duringe the moneths of Novembre and Decembre, for eche lode iiijd.

For carryinge lodes of stones from the kyng's quarrie to the lodge iiijd a lode.

For wages to workemen bareinge and getting stone for the milne-dam, cxx lodes at ijd per lode gettinge and ijd per lode carrienge.

RICHARD RAYNOR, Kyng's Provost.
THOMAS SOMERSCALES, Auditor."

Henry VI.

It does not fall within the scope of this work to follow Henry V. in his career of foreign conquests. The signal victory achieved by him at Agincourt inspired the English people with an attachment amounting almost to idolatry to their young and gallant sovereign. The whole of his subsequent reign exhibited one continued series of triumphs, and the historian of the House of Mortimer must search in vain through the chronicles of the time for information of interest connected with the earl of March.

Henry's reign was of brief duration. Suddenly arrested

in the midst of his brilliant conquests in France, the hand of death snatched the laurel and the diadem from his brow, before he had realized half the ambitious dreams which haunted his soul with visions of glory. His imagination, warmed by the exploits of Richard Cœur de Lion, meditated conquests which should eclipse the splendours of the Crusades ; he panted to encounter infidels in a distant quarter of the globe, and to rescue the holy sepulchre from Turkish dominion. According to Monstrelet, the historian of the time, the name of Jerusalem, occurring in the psalms with which the officiating priests endeavoured to console the monarch in his dying moments, arrested his failing breath, and he disclosed to his friends the romantic expedition which he had so fondly cherished. Descending to the grave in the full flush of manhood's prime, he left the crown to his son, an infant of nine months old, the unfortunate Henry VI.

Henry V. bequeathed the regency of the realm to his younger brother, Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, one of the most cultured men of his age, the founder of the Bodleian Library. Parliament, however, set aside the nomination of the late king in favour of Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, a younger son of John o Gaunt.

As Henry VI. grew to manhood, he proved to be wholly destitute of those qualities which had distinguished his father. He was virtuous and devout, but displayed an indecision of character which afterwards developed into imbecility.

He married Margaret, daughter of the Duke of Anjou, a woman of vigorous mind and commanding talents, who soon acquired a powerful influence over the king, and a baneful ascendancy in his court.

> "This woman," says Polydore Vergil,* "when she perceived the king her husband to do nothing of his own head, but to rule wholly by the duke of Gloucester's advice, and that himself took no great heed

* Polydore Vergil, a native of Urbins, was sent to this country by Pope Alexander VI., as sub-collector of Peter's Pence. He enjoyed the friendship of Erasmus, and was recommended to Henry VII. by those who had been acquainted with him in his exile. It was at the request of that monarch that he wrote his history, which is tinged with a strong Lancashire bias.

or thought as concerning the government, determined to take upon her that charge, and little by little to deprive the duke of that great authority which he had."

This course of policy on the part of the queen was indirectly the cause of plunging the nation into the horrors of a prolonged Civil War.

In 1454, the King and Queen, accompanied by their son, a boy of six years, made a royal progress through the country. The reason assigned was benefit to the king's health by gratifying his favourite pastime of hunting, from the enjoyment of which he had been long debarred during a period of illness. We have in the following letter of this date a proof that the queen was the real ruler, as the mandate is issued by her authority :—

"To Richard Rayner, King's Provost. By the Queene—To the Keeper of Or Parc of Pountefracte or his Depute there. Wel beloved, we wol and expressly charge you that, for certaine considerations moving us, our game within our par, whereof ye have the saufe garde and keping, ye do with all diligence to be cherished, favered, and kept, withovt suffryng eny personne, of what degre, estat or condicion that he be, to hunt there to th' extent that at what tyme it shal please us to resorte thedor, yor trew acquital may be founden for the good keping and replenishing thereof, to th' accompissement of Or intencion in this partie. And that in no wise ye obeie ne servt eny other warrant, but if hit be under our signet, and signed with Or owne hande, and that ye faill not hereof, as ye will eschew our displeasure at yor perill, and upon forfeitnre of the kepying of Or said parc."

We find no record of the royal party reaching Pontefract on this occasion. A few months after the date of the above letter, hostilities broke out between the rival factions of York and Lancaster, and the remaining years of the life of Henry VI. were full of misfortune. Amid the numerous civil wars which have deluged England with blood, there is no domestic strife recorded in our annals the history of which is more fertile in great events and romantic incidents than the long and sanguinary contest between the adherents of the White and the Red Roses.

CHAPTER XVI.

—o—

The brother blindly shed the brother's blood,
The father coldly slaughter'd his own son;
The son compelled, been butcher to the sire;
All this divided York and Lancaster."—*Shakespeare.*

The Wars of the Roses.

The death of the earl of March seemed to secure the permanent establishment of the Lancastrian family upon the throne, though his hereditary claims as grandson of Lionel (the *third* son of Edward III.) descended to the son of his sister Anne, who had married Richard, duke of Cambridge (son of the *fifth* son of Edward III). This son was Richard, duke of York, who claimed to have a prior right to the crown over the House of Lancaster, descendants of the *fourth* son of Edward III.

It was not, however, until a considerable period had elapsed, and many circumstances had combined to weaken the Lancastrian king (Henry VI.), that the duke of York attained a dangerous pre-eminence in the State. Events with which Richard Plantagenet had nothing to do, and circumstances over which he possessed not the slightest control, prepared the way for the momentous struggle between him and his successor, and the Lancastrian family.

Thirty-three years had passed since the accession of Henry VI., when in 1455 the civil war broke out which, for the following thirty years, was waged between the rival Houses.

In 1460 the nobles took up the question, and decided that

Richard, duke of York, possessed the legal title to the crown, but, bound by their oaths of allegiance to the reigning monarch, they could not resolve to violate those solemn assurances of fealty which they had so often made, and recommended the duke of York to waive his claim during the lifetime of the king, and rest satisfied with the reversion of the crown after Henry's decease. Both parties consented to this arrangement, Henry sacrificing the interests of his son, Prince Edward, for the doubtful hope of present tranquillity, while Richard—who, being two years older than the king, could only flatter himself with a remote chance of succeeding to the throne—relinquished his own expectations in favour of his descendants.

Henry's tame abandonment of his son's hopes aroused the heroic spirit of Queen Margaret, who resolved to maintain the struggle for the House of Lancaster. The whole nation was now divided; the badge of each rival party was assumed throughout the kingdom by the favourers of Henry and Richard; even in the smallest villages the rustics manifested their hostility by braving each other with the white and the red rose worn on their caps as a signal of defiance. The disunion penetrated into the homes of private families; brothers hitherto living in concord became at variance, and the son was not infrequently found in arms against his father.*

During this stormy period of English history, it was inevitable that Pontefract should be a centre of great national events, as being the ancestral home of the Lancasters ever since the time of Edward I., while the surrounding district was strongly attached to the Lancastrian party. Consequently, around the immediate neighbourhood of Pontefract were fought some of the bloodiest battles in this memorable contest.

The winter of 1460-1 must have been an anxious and exciting time for Pontefract. The castle was in the hands of a Lancastrian army, King Henry VI. was a prisoner in the Tower, and Queen Margaret a fugitive in Scotland. This indomitable woman, however, once more rallied her northern

* See Chronicle of William of Wyrchester.

adherents, and arrived in Yorkshire with an army of 20,000 men. Meanwhile Richard, duke of York, leaving his eldest son Edward, earl of March, to collect an army in the western counties and follow him to the north, hastened forward to his fortress at Sandal, near Wakefield. He had with him his second son Edmund, earl of Rutland, a youth of 17 years, and some 5,000 men. Here he encamped, awaiting the reinforcements collected by his son, when he was suddenly confronted by 20,000 Lancastrians who had marched from Pontefract under Lords Clifford, Dacre and Northumberland.

Battle of Wakefield Green.

Against the remonstrances of his nobles, Richard resolved to risk a battle against these enormous odds, with the result that his forces were utterly routed, and he himself slain (30 December, 1460). Perceiving the fate of the day, Robert Apsall, the chaplain and tutor of young Rutland, led his pupil out of the field in the hope of conveying him to a place of safety. Lord Clifford, hot from recent slaughter, encountered the fugitives near Wakefield Bridge, and demanded the name of the younger, whose dress betrayed his rank. The terrified youth fell upon his knees, and appealed for mercy. "Save him," cried the attendant priest, "he is the son of a prince, and may do you good hereafter," but the fierce Clifford, calling to mind his father's recent death at St. Albans fight, ruthlessly answered, "By God's blood, thy father killed mine, and so will I do to thee and all thy kin," and plunged his dagger into the young lad's breast.*

Leland, who visited Wakefield about 1544, i.e. 84 years after the battle, records that the place where young Rutland was slain, was "a little above the Barres beyond the brigge going up in the town of Wakefield, that standeth full fairly upon a clyning ground," and he added that, "the common saying is, that the earl would have taken a poor woman's house for succour, but she shut the door and straight the earl was killed."

Historians differ respecting the manner of the duke of

* Dugdale.

York's death. Whethamstede affirms that he was taken prisoner alive, and his dying moments insulted by the brutal derision of his enemies, who, twisting a crown of grass round his temples, hailed him in scorn—"king without a kingdom; prince without a people." Others report that he was slain in action, but nearly all agree in the statement that the head of the duke, adorned with a paper crown* in derision of his claims, was borne by Lord Clifford upon a pike into the presence of Margaret, who was then at York, and that she laughed at the spectacle and ordered it to be placed upon one of the gates; "it is fitting" she said, "that he should overlook his own city."

The earl of Salisbury and other nobles taken at Wakefield fight, died by the axe of the executioner at Pontefract Castle, and the head of Salisbury was placed on Micklegate Bar beside that of the duke of York, "Leave room for the heads of March and Warwick,"† said the exultant queen, "for they shall soon follow,"—little suspecting that she spoke of the future king and "king-maker," with both of whom she had soon to reckon.

The bodies of the duke of York and his son, the earl of Rutland, found a temporary resting-place in the church of the Friar Preachers at Pontefract.

Stow informs us that "Richard Neville, earl of Salisbury and lord of Middleham, being taken prisoner, was led to Pontefract Castle, and had his life granted for a great ransom, but the common people, who loved him not, took him by violence out of the castle, and struck off his head in the Market Place;" while Hall states that "he was executed at Pontefract Castle by order of Queen Margaret."

The earl of March, now duke of York, was marching from the west country to avenge the death of his father. On the 2nd of February, 1461, he encountered and defeated a Lancastrian army at Mortimer's Cross near Ludlow. Margaret meanwhile was hastening to London at the head of a considerable army, which Warwick attempted unsuccessfully to intercept at St. Albans. The citizens of London refused to receive the queen,

* "His head during life busied with expectations of sovereignty was mock'd with a paper crown after his death."—*Habington.*

† See Apendix D.

who, hearing of the approach of the now united armies of Warwick and York bent on avenging the defeat at St. Albans, resolved to return to the north where the Lancastrians' influence was strongest. Roused by her misfortunes to greater energy of action, she soon rallied around her standard an army of 60,000 men. Meanwhile Edward, duke of York, was proclaimed king in Westminster Hall, and assumed the exercise of regal authority.*

Edward did not await the ceremony of coronation, but hastened to strike the decisive blow which should leave him without a rival in the kingdom. To this end he despatched Warwick with a large force to the north, while he collected an army around London. Warwick left London on the 16th March, 1461, and halted at Pontefract, where he was joined by the new king on the 27th. The Yorkist army, now about 40,000 strong, lay encamped between the Castle and Bubwith Wash ; a vanguard under Lord Fitzwalter secured the passage over the river at Ferrybridge, and the Lancastrians under Margaret held the city of York. A distance of twenty-five miles separated the towers of Pontefract, under whose shadows young Edward was marshalling his army, from Micklegate Bar, over which the head of his father was withering in the chilling gales of that bitter month of March. Nine of those miles covered the distance from York to Tadcaster, and the intervening ground from the Wharfe to the Aire was the scene of the momentous struggle which was destined to decide the fate of the kingship of the realm.

Skirmish at Ferrybridge.

The Lancastrian leaders no sooner received information that the Yorkists were approaching Pontefract from the south, than they recognised that the important passage at Ferrybridge must be at once seized and held. With this object Clifford was sent forward with a flying column, but he was too late—the bridge was already in the hands of the Yorkist vanguard. Clifford however laid his plans for a night attack, the guards at the bridge were taken by surprise before

* Whethamstede, a monk of St. Albans.

dawn on the 28th of March, and amongst the slain was Lord Fitzwalter. This unexpected onslaught and the death of such a brilliant leader as Fitzwalter had hitherto proved himself to be, caused a panic in the Yorkist camp at Pontefract, which threatened to end in a precipitous flight. Warwick, however, galloped up to Edward's tent, dismounted, and, killing his horse, cried out, "Let him fly that will, for surely by this cross I will tarry with him who will tarry with me, fall back, fall edge," at the same time kissing the crossed hilt of his sword, still reeking with the blood of his charger.

Skirmish at Brotherton.

Edward gave prompt orders to his uncle, Lord Fauconbridge, and Sir Walter Brunt to cross the river higher up and out-flank the Lancastrian vanguard. Sheltered by the thick woods which covered the south bank of the Aire, a portion of the Yorkist forces marched by Red Hill to Castleford, where they crossed the river, and, hugging the northern bank through Newton Wallis to Fairburn, fell upon the unsuspecting Lancastrians at Brotherton Marsh, completely routing them. In the pursuit which followed many of the Lancastrians, including Lord Clifford, were slain between Brotherton and Dintingdale. The victorious Yorkists then fell back on their supports at Pontefract, having regained the important pass at Ferrybridge without serious loss.

Brotherton Marsh is now sound pasture land; during the draining operations, human skeletons, fragments of ancient armour, and other relics of warfare were frequently found.

The death of Clifford, who was only in his 26th year, was a great blow to the Lancastrian party. Less than six years had elapsed since his father had fallen at the first battle of St. Albans, and he had naturally joined the same cause with all the martial enthusiasm of youth, and proved himself an active and enterprising leader. His slaying of the young Earl of Rutland in cold blood at Wakefield remains a dark stain upon his otherwise noble character, and has permanently affixed to his memory the name of "The Butcher." It is a

tradition of his family that his body was buried with a heap of untitled slain on the battlefield. (See Appendix C.)

Battle of Towton.

Edward now advanced his great force over the river to meet the main body of the Lancastrians, which was pushing forward by Tadcaster, and during the eve of Palm Sunday the van arrived at Saxton village, while less than two miles to the north lay encamped some 60,000 Lancastrians ;* the centre under the command of the Earl of Northumberland at the hamlet of Towton ; by the road leading towards Saxton was the left wing under Lord Welles and Sir Andrew Trollope ; while the right wing was under the command of Lords Dacre and Fitz-Hugh.

Palm Sunday dawned and found the two vast armies facing each other in battle array ; then ensued a fierce and long-doubtful contest. About noon the Duke of Norfolk arrived from Pontefract with the Yorkist reserves, and fell upon Lord Welles's division. This was the turning point of the battle, for gradually the Lancastrian left wing was doubled upon the centre, the confusion increased, and, after an obstinate struggle continued throughout the afternoon, ended in the complete rout of the Lancastrians. When night fell upon the scene of carnage, some 38,000 lay slain upon the snow-covered fields, while the Yorkists, elated with their victory, continued the pursuit of the vanquished remnants of fugitives right up to the gates of York.

The titled slain at Towton Battle included the Earl of Northumberland ; John, Lord Neville, brother of the Earl of Westmoreland ;† Lord Welles (buried in Methley Church,

* There is much reason to believe that the numbers reported by the old chroniclers to have been engaged in the Battles of the Roses are frequently exaggerated, but Green the historian, who always inclines to the side of moderation, says about the Battle of Towton, "the two armies together numbered nearly 120,000 men."—History of the English People, Vol. I., page 575.

† Buried in Saxton Church, but there is no memorial of him existing there now.

where there is a stately monument to his memory) ;* Ralph Lord Dacre (whose tomb is a conspicuous object in Saxton churchyard) ; Anthony Rivers, Lord Scales ; Lords Willoughby, Malley and Beaumont ; Sir Andrew Trollope ; Sir John Strafford ; Sir Richard Percy ; Sir John Burton and many others—indeed, it is stated by a contemporary historian, that "the flower of English nobility fell at Towton."

The untitled dead were buried in heaps in "certaine deepe trenches" in the field still called "The Graves," being the second field from the road between Towton and Saxton villages, directly opposite the disused Towton Dale quarry. The five huge mounds which Leland saw and described in 1534, have since been destroyed by the levelling influence of the plough, and the "greate chappel" founded at Towton by Richard III., "in token of praier for the souls of the men slayn at Palmesunday Field," has been completely swept away. Only its site is preserved in the name of "Chapel Garth," an enclosure just behind Towton Hall.†

On one of the bells in the tower of Saxton church may still be read this inscription :—

> "Willelmus Salley armiger de Saxton, me fecit fieri
> Santa Margarita ora pro nobis."

William Salley, the donor of this bell, was lord of the manor of Saxton, and fought at Towton on the side of the Lancastrians. We infer from the above inscription that even after

* Lord Welles married Cicely, daughter of Sir Robert Waterton, of Methley Hall. Her effigy, cut in alabaster, lies beside the effigy of her gallant husband in the Waterton Chantry of the fine old church at Methley.

† The following extracts are of great interest as regards Towton Chapel :—"Toughton 22 Dec. 1502. Whereas the Chapell of Toughton in ye parish of Saxton, in which chapell and ground about it very many bodies of men slain in ye time of warre lye buryed . . . Now forasmuch as ye said chappell is not sufficiently endowed with possessions and rents as to sustaine it and have Divine service celebrated therein, without the charitable alms of Christian peopl elsewhere. Whereuppon William Abp of Yorke hereby granted his licence and authoritie to Dom., Robt Burdet, chpln to celebrate Divine service in ye sd chappell, and to the Inhabitants of ye Towne of Toughton to found a Gilde or fraternitie in ye same chappell to the honour of St. Mary ye Vergin, St. Anne and St. Thomas ye Martyr." The Archbishop proceeds to grant to those who would assist in donations to the fabrie and endowment an :—"Indulgentia 40 dierum for 2 yeares, pro capello de Toughton noviter edificatur." See "Fabric Rolls of York Minster."

defeat, his heart was true to Queen Margaret. He lived to see the restoration of the House of Lancaster, and died in 1492.

Immediately after his great victory at Towton, Edward pushed forward to York, in the hope of capturing Queen Margaret, but she had fled northwards.

His first act on entering York was to order the heads of his father and the earl of Salisbury to be taken down from the city gates, and interred with their respective bodies lying in St. Richard's Church at Pontefract.

Among the long list of names in the Act of Attainder which followed Edward's victory occurs that of "Richard Everyngham late of Pontfreyt in the shire of Yorke." This list includes 12 nobles, and 153 knights and squires, whose estates were forfeited and went to replenish the royal purse, or were given to some zealous adherent of the House of York.*

Edward spent the months of April and May in reducing the north to obedience, and then proceeded to London, where he was solemnly crowned as King Edward IV. Margaret and her son eventually escaped to the continent, but the year 1471 witnessed the tragic close of the hopes of this brave but unfortunate queen, for during that year her only son Prince Edward was slain at Tewkesbury fight, and Henry VI. was found dead in the Tower of London. Edward IV. had now witnessed the downfall of his enemies, and, securely seated upon the throne, reigned without a rival.

* For example:—"Ralph Vestynden obtained an annual pension of £10 for his services as banner-bearer at Towton. See Parl. Rolls, Vol. VI., p. 93

CHAPTER XVII.

—o—

"O Pomfret, Pomfret, O, thou bloody prison,
Fatal and ominous to noble peers."—*Shakespeare.*

Richard duke of Gloucester at Pontefract.

Five years after the victory of Towton, Edward IV. appointed his brother Richard (Duke of Gloucester), not yet twenty years old, High Constable of England, with the almost regal powers conferred by this important office, and that of chief Seneschal of the duchy of Lancaster, with Pontefract Castle as the chief seat of his power. These great offices were wielded by this clever young prince, who had well earned the honours conferred upon him after four years of ceaseless vicissitudes of war and diplomacy. His time during the remaining years of Edward's reign appears to have been chiefly passed at the castles of Middleham and Pontefract, the former endeared by the associations of childhood both to himself and his youthful consort, Anne, daughter of Warwick the "king-maker."* The celebrated fortress frowning over the town of Pontefract had had a weird and terrible history, as we have shewn in the course of these Chronicles, but Richard was yet to add to the crimes committed

* "Richard, represented as a monster of mankind after his death, was not so esteemed in his lifetime in these northern parts"—Drake's "Eboracum."

in that stronghold—crimes destined to be associated with the darkest stain upon his character.

Removal of the duke of York's body from Pontefract.

In 1466 Edward IV. decided to transfer the remains of his father and brother from St. Richard's Church at Pontefract, to the magnificient collegiate church at Fotheringay founded by his ancestor. The funeral, as described by contemporary historians, was of regal splendour, purposely designed to impress the people with the kingly estate of the deceased Duke. The black velvet pall which covered the bier was overlaid with cloth of gold, to signify that of right he was a king. Bishops and abbots went in advance to prepare the several churches on the route for the reception of the remains of the royal Duke. Nicholas, the Prior of Pontefract monastery, accompanied by many nobles, rode at the head of the imposing procession wending its way from Pontefract by Barnsdale, through Doncaster, Grantham, and Stamford to Fotheringay, which was reached on the seventh day, Monday 29 July 1466.

A remarkable feature of this ceremony was the absence of George, duke of Clarence, heir presumptive to the throne. To Richard, his youngest brother, the king assigned the office which filial love would regard as the post of honour. As chief mourner, Richard followed next after the hearse during that seven days' journey. The king, accompanied by several dukes, earls and knights, met the calvalcade at the entry of the churchyard at Fotheringay, and here the remains of the Duke of York found a second resting-place. Thirty-five years later, the aged Duchess of York died, and was buried in accordance with her own expressed wish by the side of her gallant husband. The bones of this illustrious couple were, a century later, removed to a vault in the new church at Fotheringay by order of Queen Elizabeth, in consequence of the destruction of the original church where they had been interred.

Edward V.

Edward IV. was the heir of great opportunities, which he sacrificed to sensual indulgences, and the brilliant promise of the morning of his reign was soon effaced. On his death in 1483, he was

succeeded by his young son Edward V. Richard, the lord of Pontefract, at once established himself as Protector of the Realm, a preliminary step to the carrying out of his ambitious design of seizing the crown for himself. His aims were strongly opposed by some of the nobles, especially by Lord Hastings, whom Richard caused to be executed in London, on a baseless charge of witchcraft, while earl Rivers, Sir Richard Grey and Sir Thomas Vaughan were secretly removed to the castle at Pontefract, on an equally baseless charge of conspiring against the life of the Protector.

Execution of Rivers.

These three nobles were arraigned before the Earl of Norhumberland, in the great hall of the castle, and after the mockery of a trial, in which they were not allowed to speak in their defence, were sentenced to death. The prisoners were then led out into the Court-yard, proclaimed traitors, and their heads struck off, Sir Richard Radcliffe presiding at the execution.

Rivers and Grey, the latter a mere youth, met their fate in silence ; Sir Thomas Vaughan, who had grown grey in the service of Edward IV., boldly vindicated himself and his companions from the malignant accusation which had been devised to sanction this judicial murder. On the scaffold, he exclaimed :—"I appeal to the high tribunal of God against the Duke of Gloucester, for this wrongful murder and our real innocence." The brutal Radcliffe replied :—"You have made a goodly appeal, now lay down your head."—"I," said the dauntless veteran, "die in the right cause, take heed you die not in the wrong," and bowing his head submitted to the stroke.

The bodies of the three victims were buried by the monks in the church of their Priory at Pontefract.

A hair shirt found beneath the splendid garments of Earl Rivers—the secret remembrancer and avenger of his sins, according to the fashions of those times—was afterwards hung as a relic before the image of St. Mary at Doncaster*.

It is remarkable that, notwithstanding the crime which

* Rous, a contemporary historian.

the Protector perpetrated in thus condemning to death these innocent men, the will of Earl Rivers, dated from Pontefract, June 1483, concludes with an appeal to him to see it faithfully executed :—

> "I humbly beseech my lord of Gloucester in the worship of Christ's passion, and for the merit and weal of his soul, to help and assist as supervisor of this testament, that mine executors may, with his pleasure, fulfil this my last will."

Richard had the grace to accede to this dying request, and he also secured to the son of Sir Richard Grey an annuity of "100 merks out of our honour and lordship of Pountfreit."*

Richard III. at Pontefract.

Having removed these powerful nobles, Richard openly seized the crown. Not satisfied with being crowned king in London, he made a progress to York, to be also crowned and acknowledged in that northern capital. On approaching Pontefract, "the people had been commanded to evince their joy at the honour conferred upon them, that the southern lords might mark the resaying of his grace."†

It was during this visit of the usurper to Pontefract Castle that the young Edward V. and his brother mysteriously disappear from history, and from this visit Pontefract dates its first Charter of Incorporation, Richard conferring this honour on Saturday, 6 September 1483; and the following July, he created John Hill the first mayor of the Borough. This charter was duly confirmed by Parliament on the 9th August, 1484.

From Ellis "Original Letters" (2nd series, vol. 1, p. 161) we transcribe the following letter addressed from Pontefract by Richard to his mother :—

> "Madam, I recommend me to you as heartily as is to me possible, beseeching you in my most humble and effectuous wise of your daily blessing, to my singular comfort and defence in my need. And, madam, I heartily beseech you that I may often hear you to my comfort. And such news as be here, my servant, Thomas Bryan, this bearer, shall show you, to whom please it you to give credence unto. And, madam, I beseech you to be good and gracious lady to my lord

* Harl: MSS. † Drake's "Eboracum."

my chamberlain to be your officer in Wiltshire in such as Calyngbourne had; I trust he shall therein do you service. And that it please you that by this bearer I may understand your pleasure in this behalf. And I pray God to send you the accomplishment of your noble desires. Written at Pountfreit the 3rd day of June, with the hand of your humble son, Richard Rex."

Richard III. was not destined to occupy the throne of England for more than two years; his crimes had alienated the people and sapped the foundations of the House of York, and he fell beneath its ruins at Bosworth Field (1485). The king was only thirty-six when the hand of violence thus terminated his short, tumultuous and tragic reign.

Henry Richmond, the heir of the House of Lancaster, was at once proclaimed king as Henry VII. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV., and thus, after thirty years of civil strife, during which Pontefract Castle had been a centre of great historic events, the rival Houses of York and Lancaster were finally united, an event which may be said to mark an epoch of English history.

We have a local record of this period, in the will of Richard Rawson of Water Fryston, who, dying in 1483, bequeathed:—

"To buy some ornaments for the church of Friston-by-the-Water v. marks. To buy etc. for Castelforth Church iijli, vjs, viiijd. For Sherburn-in-Elmet Church x marks. For the Church of the Blak Freres in Pountfreit xls. For the monkes of S. John in Pountfreit xls. To poure maidens mariages, poure housholders and poure peopl at Pountfreit, Sherburn, Friston and Castelforth xxvjli, xiijs, iiijd. In amendinge Ferrybrigge and Castelforth brigge and high-weis (highways) xxli."

This Richard Rawson realised great wealth as a London merchant. The names of three of the family, James, Richard and Christopher are found in the testamentary burials of the church of St. Andrew's at Ferry Fryston.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Thus shall Memory often in dreams sublime,
Catch a glimpse of the days that are over;
Thus sighing, look through the waves of Time,
For the long-faded glories they cover."—*Moore.*

Pontefract during the Tudor period.

Henry VII. during the second year of his reign (1487) made a "royal progress" from London to York. After leaving Doncaster the King was met on the Barnsdale Road by gentry of these parts who had remained faithful to the Lancastrian faction during the late civil war, and escorted with great pomp to Pontefract Castle, the ancient patrimony of his family.*

One ancient record runs thus:—

"By the way of Barnsdale, a littell beyonde Robyn Hudde stone, th' erle of Northumberlsnd, with a right greate and noble company of 38 knyghts of his fee'd men besides esquiers and yeomen, met and gave his attendance upon the King, and so proceeded that same Mondaye to Pomfrete, where his Grace remaynede unto the Thursday next following, ... then through Tadcastell . . . . . and so on to York."†

During the King's stay at Pontefract Castle, he confirmed to the borough all the rights, privileges, and immunities contained in the recent Charter of Incorporation granted by his predecessor.

* See Polydore Vergil's History.
† See Leland's Coll., Vol. ix., p. 185.

Wolsey.

We find few local records during the next sixty years. Cardinal Wolsey—

> "That once trod the ways of glory,
> And sounded all the depths and shoals of honour,"

on his banishment from court by Henry VIII. passed through Pontefract in 1530 on his way to Cawood Castle. Near a stone cross he is said to have administered the rites of confirmation to upwards of 500 children assembled from the adjacent parishes. This ceremony took place at "a great stone cross, on a plain green, a quarter of a mile beyond Ferrybrigge."*

The "plain green" and "quarter of a mile beyond Ferrybrigge" clearly point to some site near Brotherton. Up to the year 1871, there stood on the edge of the footway near Brotherton Church, the remains of a stone cross, which judging from the size of the portion of the broken shaft must originally have been of considerable altitude. It is not improbable that this may have been a relic of the "great stone cross" referred to by Cavendish.†

Later in the same year, the earl of Northumberland was despatched to Cawood to arrest Wolsey on a charge of high treason, with orders to deliver him into the custody of the earl of Shewsbury at Sheffield. Cavendish gives a graphic description of the last days of Wolsey, of which the following extract is of local interest :—

> "The prisoner, mounted on a mule, left Cawood on Sunday 9 November 1530, and arrived the same night at Pontefract Monastery. As he entered the town of Pontefract, it was a beautiful starlight night, the heavens shone with resplendent glory, and though a keen and cutting atmosphere was wafting all around, the people left their homes and ran with torches in their hands, to welcome the venerable Wolsey to the town. Every thoroughfare was blocked up with a living mass of human beings, who mournfully awaited his approach, and craved his blessing as he rode by them. He was lodged in the Monastery for the night, and the next day my Lorde removed towards Doncaster . . "

Sheffield was reached on the 8th November, and from thence he set out on the journey towards London. Three days later, sick and faint, he was received at Leicester Abbey by the

* See Cavendish, the biographer of Wolsey.

† See Forrest's antiquities of Brotherton, p. 104.

Abbot, "To whom my Lorde said: 'Father Abbot, I am come hether to leave my bones amonge you,'" and here the great statesman and ecclesiastic expired on the 30th November, 1530.

"SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI."

Suppression of the Pontefract Monasteries.

During the year 1536-7, the King's Commissioners arrived in the course of their office at Pontefract, and took an inventory of its two Religious Houses, as to their contents, revenues, and possessions. In 1538 the blow, long contemplated, fell upon a large number of the smaller monastic establishments, including the Pontefract House of Friar Preachers.*

The following year witnessed the suppression of the larger monasteries, and in the general downfall the long history of the Pontefract Priory of St. John the Evangelist came to an end 24th November, 1539.†

A local incident connected with the suppression is recorded of one William Tindall, Esq., of Brotherton Hall. When the commissioners were appraising the goods of the monastery, William Tindall, attended by a servant carrying a spade and mattock, marched into Pontefract and raised a tumult. From the Market Cross he made the following address: "If there be any person that Jesus Christ is indebted to, let him come and make his claim, for Jesus Christ is dead, and I have brought my man to make his grave and bury him." The appraisers appeared on the scene and asked what was the matter. Tindall told them he was come to bury the body of Christ. The appraisers were angry and bade him take care what he said; but he replied "Surely Jesus is dead; was it ever heard that the goods were appraised before the owner is dead? Ye are appraising his goods, therefore I thought he was dead, and what more likely?" ‡

* An admirable "History of the Black Friars of Pontefract," by the late Mr. Richard Holmes, F.S.A., was published in 1891, to which we refer our readers for many interesting local particulars.

† See Chapter VI.

‡ See Wilson M.SS. Leeds Library.

The Pilgrimage of Grace.

The northern counties were especially concerned at the suppression of the monasteries. "The downfall of the Religious Houses," says Allen,* "struck a terrible blow at the grandeur of York." Drake says: "The famous and flourishing city received a terrible shock by the tearing up of these foundations."† Pontefract would undoubtedly suffer proportionately from the effect of this great social and religious upheaval. Indeed the suffering was universal, nuns and monks were ruthlessly turned out, and the buildings and revenues largely diverted to secular purposes. The country was flooded with beggars, for the sick, the poor, and the aged, who hitherto had been wont to receive relief and consolation from the monastic institutions, were now cast upon the rough mercies of the world to beg or starve.‡ This condition of things culminated in a rebellion which well-nigh shook the stability of the throne. Led by Sir Robert Aske of Aughton, near Howden, no fewer than 30,000 men, "well horsed and well appointed," and including such influential men as the Percies and Sir Robert Constable, marched through Yorkshire. The procession was headed by a vast number of priests, who carried crucifixes in their hands in order to influence the enthusiasm of the crowds who were thus rushing upon their own destruction, in organizing a stout resistance to such a high-handed desecration as that which the king's measures implied. The proclamation of the rebels stated their demands to be:—(1) Restoration of the Religious Houses; (2) remission of the recently-made subsidy; (3) exemption of the clergy from the payment of tenths and first-fruits to the Crown; (4) repeal of the Statute of Uses; (5) the removal of villein blood from the Privy Council; (6) the deposition and punishment of the heretic Bishops.

Laying siege to Hull, that town at once surrendered, and a similar fate befel York, from which city the insurgents

* Author of a History of Yorkshire, published 1828.

† See Drake's "Eboracum."

‡ We can scarcely help noting that near the site of the Pontefract Monastery now stands the Pontefract Union Workhouse.

advanced on Pontefract Castle, whose tame surrender by old Lord D'Arcy of Templehurst gave "the pilgrims" command of the town and the road to Doncaster.

Having secured this fortress, Aske convened a council of notables and clergy, and presided over an assembly of 34 nobles and knights in the great hall of the Castle. *

Lord D'Arcy appears to have sympathised with the movement, for here he joined the rebels, and was appointed one of their leaders. We learn from the report of the Lancaster Herald, sent to Pontefract by the Earl of Shrewsbury to make a proclamation, that Aske with Lord D'Arcy, the Archbishop of York, the late abbots of Fountains and Jervaulx, and others, were at Pontefract Castle on the 20th October of that year. This herald gives an account of the scene which met him as he attempted to read the king's proclamation from the market-cross. The excited people raised an uproar, during which a messenger from Aske commanded the herald to proceed to the Castle. When admitted into the Great Hall, Aske demanded to see the proclamation, and, after reading it over aloud to the leaders present, he made answer: "Herald, as a messenger you are welcome to me and my company, but as for this proclamation, it shall not be read at the market-cross of Pontefract, or in any place amongst my people, who are all of one accord with the points of our articles, clearly intending to see a reformation, or else to die in this cause." After further words the herald was dismissed with a safe conduct to the Earl of Shrewsbury at Sheffield.

It is unnecessary to accompany the rebels further in their progress to the south, the subsequent dispersion of their forces, and the ruin of their cause, except to note the severe measures dealt out by the king to the Yorkshire leaders of this unfortunate "Pilgrimage of Grace." The abbots of Fountains, Jervaulx and Rievaulx, with the Prior of Bridlington and Sir Thomas Percy, were executed at Tyburn. Sir Robert Constable was hanged in chains over Beverley Gate at Hull; Lord

* Edward Lord Herbert of Cherburg:—"Life and Reign of Henry VIII." (1649).

D'Arcy met his fate on Tower Hill, while the gallant Sir Robert Aske fell a victim to the king's broken promises, in front of Clifford's Tower at York.

The New Hall. The first mention of the connection of the Shrewsbury family with Pontefract was in connection with this suppression of the "Pilgrimage of Grace," George, Earl of Shrewsbury, being appointed the king's lieutenant to act against the insurgents, and it was probably as a reward for the zeal he displayed in this commission that his grandson, George Talbot, obtained a grant of some of the possessions of the old Pontefract monastery, for he is known to have pulled down the monastic buildings of St. John and used the materials in the erection of the New Hall. Fragments of an older mediæval building may yet be seen in the walls of the mansion, and even the beams and lintels used in its construction have old mortised holes in them, evidencing that they had done duty before in a much older building. These features are a singular proof that the dismantled ruins of St. John's were used by George Talbot in the erection of this mansion.

This George Talbot inherited the earldom of Shrewsbury in 1559, and was in 1571 created Lord High Steward and Field Marshal of England. He had four sons, of whom the eldest died before his father; the second, Gilbert, succeeded him in the earldom in 1590, but died in 1616, leaving no male heirs; the third, Edward, succeeded and died childless in 1617; the fourth, Henry, left no male heir but only a daughter, who, marrying a Robert Pierrepont, took this property at Pontefract into the Pierrepont family. Robert Pierrepont was in 1628 created Baron Pierrepont, and the following year Earl of Kingston-upon-Hull. The Earl of Kingston was shortly afterwards raised to the dignity of a dukedom, and these ancient monastic properties remained in the possession of the family until the beginning of the 18th century, when the then Duke of Kingston disposed of them to an aunt of Archbishop Dawes, who inherited them from her. His only child married Edwin Lascelles in 1746, by which means they

Remains of New Hall.

came into the Harewood family. The Earl of Harewood is still the lay patron of Pontefract.

Henry VIII. at Pontefract.

During the year 1541, Henry VIII. made a progress to the north, which had for its objective the pacification of the northern counties after the late disturbances occasioned by the ill-fated "Pilgrimage of Grace."

In the course of his journey towards Pontefract (August 1541) the king was met on the Barnsdale Road by the Archbishop of York, accompanied by 300 of his clergy, and presented with a sum of £600—a considerable sum of money in those days.

The King remained at Pontefract Castle several days. This visit to Yorkshire was memorable for one of the painful incidents of this reign. Leaving the Queen, Catherine Howard, at Pontefract Castle on the 23rd of August, the King went to Wressel Castle and Hull, and arrived at York on the 15th September. On the 27th September he returned southwards by way of Hull and Lincoln, reaching Windsor on the 26th October.

It was not until the 1st November that the King became aware of the Queen's misconduct with one of her old lovers at Pontefract Castle. A True Bill was found against her by the Justices at Doncaster on Tuesday the 24th November. Sir Robert Stapilton, Sir William Mallory, Sir William Fairfax, Sir Peter Vavasour, with William Vavasour, Edward Saltmarsh and other Esquires, served on the Grand Jury at Doncaster which condemned the Queen,* and the unhappy lady was executed on Tower Hill in December 1541.

The only other reference of this reign we have found is dated 1549, which year witnessed a serious outbreak of the Plague in Pontefract, from which pestilence a large number of its inhabitants died.

Queen Elizabeth, towards the close of her reign, repaired

* See "Henry the Eighth's Progress in Yorkshire 1541," by the Rev. Joseph Hunter, F.S.A., Archæol. Inst., York volume.

the old Castle of Pontefract, and entirely rebuilt the chapel of St. Clement within it. Half a century later this chapel was involved in the general demolition of the Castle, but the outline of the foundations is still complete, and measures 68 feet by 28. Many of the defenders who were killed, or who died during the sieges of the Castle, were buried within the chapel walls, among them being the gallant Captain William Paulden,* a member of a Pontefract family of some note during the 16th and 17th centuries.

Pontefract Grammar School.

We find it frequently stated that this School was founded by Edward VI. about 1549, but the earliest traces of the history of the foundation date much further back, and may be said to bring it into connection with the earliest traces of the history of the town.

When Ilbert de Lacy founded St. Clement's Chapel within the Castle, late in the 11th century, one of the items in the list of its endowments and possessions is the "scholis de Kirkeby et Pontefracto," the use of the two place-names evidently meaning not two places and schools, but the transition stage in the displacement of the ancient name of Kirkby, by the Norman name of Pontefract.

In 1267 an inquiry was held before Henry de Lacy, when the "customs," or, as we should say, statutes or orders, of the Hospital of St. Nicholas were written down, and a copy entered in the Chartulary of St. John's Priory to which the Hospital, though a much older foundation, had been subordinated. At this period the establishment was found to consist of 2 chaplains and 13 brethren ; every brother received daily 2 loaves of bread with soup and pottage ; on Sunday a mess of flesh, and on Wednesday and Friday 3 herrings ; also there were distributed to the scholars of the school 40 loaves every fortnight.

Further evidence of the continuance of the School through the Middle Ages is found in later Inquisitions

* See Captain Thomas Paulden's "Pontefract Castle: an account of how it was taken," published in 1719.

relating to the Hospital of St. Nicholas. One taken in 1437 had reference to the annexation of the Honor of Pontefract to the earldom of Lincoln, and another to the annexation of the Duchy of Lancaster to the Crown. The latter Inquisition records "the jurors say the Master of the Hospital is bound to distribute to poor secular clerks (scholars) every fortnight, 40 loaves of whole meal."

From the "Valor Ecclesiasticus" of Henry VIII. (1535) it would appear that the rights of St. John's Priory over St. Nicholas Hospital had in process of time become commuted for a pension or payment of £16 14s. 8d. The "Valor" gives no detailed items of the outgoings, and so contains no separate mention of any distribution to the scholars of the school, but in administering the Chantry Act of 1549, that is some ten years after the dissolution of the monasteries, the inhabitants of Pontefract naturally wanted to know what had become of their school, formerly connected with St. Nicholas Hospital and the Monastery of St. John. The result of the inquiry was that it was specially recorded by the Commissioners that "a Grammer Schoole hath beene heretofore kept in the parish of Pountefrett with the revenues of the service of Corpus Christi, founded in the parish church there, and that the scholemaister there had for his wages yerely 59s. 2d., which scole is very necessaire to continue," and it was finally ordered that the Grammar School should continue, and that the master have towards his wages the former endowment of 59s. 2d. From this refoundation the school acquired the title of King Edward's Grammar School.

Left with this small endowment, it is not surprising to find that in 1564 the burgesses of Pontefract complained that the school was not being carried on efficiently. The appointment of schoolmaster had been since 1550 in the hands of the Receiver of the rents of the Duchy of Lancaster, but was now trasferred to the mayor and chief burgesses; who soon found that the stipend was quite inadequate to maintain a capable schoolmaster, and the matter was brought to the notice of the Crown, with the result that in 1583 the borough obtained a

decree from the Chancery Court of the Duchy of Lancaster, consolidating the several small endowments of Grammar schools in other parts of the Duchy which had been wholly neglected, and these various endowments, united with that of Pontefract, amounted to an annual income of £25 7s.2d. Of this amount it was ordered that £20 be paid to the master and the balance to an usher. The school was to be housed in a new building in Northgate, which Boniface Savage and other burgesses had promised to build and keep in repair. The following extract from the Deed of 1583 gives a clear statement of the new arrangement:—

> "And forsomuch as the said yerely stipende of £2 19s. 2d. is very little, and not sufficient to mainteine any schoolemaister meete for the bringinge upp such a greate number of youthe as be in the said towne of Pountfrett and other townes adjoyngnge that would resorte and repaire to the same if there were a learned, godly and vertuous schoolemaister to teach and instructe them; and for that the townes where the said severall schooles were to be contynued by force of the said commission and certificate are not above 8 miles distante at the moste from the said towne of Pountfrett, and some of the said townes have nowe of late neclected to have any schoolmaister to be mainteyned in them, ... whereuppon the Chauncellor and Councell of this Courte perswadinge themselves that, if the said smaller stipends were collected and put together, the same woulde mainteine a meete, learned and sufficient schoolemaister and usher, which were not only a matter very laudable, but also a greate benefite to the countrie and wayinge and considerynge howe the Queene's Most Excellente Majestie is always ready to advaunce and further the education of youthe in learnynge, vertue and godly life . . . and uppon the humble suit of Bonyface Savage and other inhabitants of the said towne of Pountfrett, who hath undertaken and faithfully promised at his and their proper costs and chardges to make and furnishe a fayer schoolebowse within the said towne, which shalbe a sufficient meet and able place for that purpose . . . . . And that the same Grammer Schoole for the better Memoriall of Her Majesties most gracious, vertuous and princely disposition for the carefull bringinge upp of youthe in learnynge, piety and vertuous life, shalbe called by the name of the most excellent princes Quene Elizabethes Schoole in Pountfrett . . . . ."

By this charter the appointment of the master was vested in the Chancellor of the Duchy, and that of the usher in the mayor and burgesses. Thus under the name of "Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School," the old foundation was again started on its mission, the inhabitants from time to time taxing themselves for the repair of the fabric and the

salary of the master, as we may learn from the Pontefract Corporation Book of Entries.

List of Schoolmasters.

In 1593 a John Marshe was appointed schoolmaster, and later in the same year a William Hartley was appointed in his place. Passing on to sixty years later we find that the appointment of both master and usher was in the hands of the burgesses.

In 1653 the schoolmaster was Thurston Elliott. On 20th April, 1654, at a Town's Meeting held in the Moothall, it was agreed that "Mr. Thomas Lake, sonne of Mr. Lake, of Castleforth, shall supplie the place of schoolmaister of Pontfract, in place of Mr. Elliott, now or late schoolemaister there."

The next record is of a Town's Meeting held 29th May, 1660, whereby "Mr. Thomas Hunt and Mr. John Lambe this day elected schoolemasters of the freeschoole of Pontefract, whoe are jointly to keepe the schoole and take the profits of the same."

In 1689 we find Mr. Thomas Atkinson "present schoolemaster of Kippax" appointed "to bee master of the Free Schoole of Pontefract."

The school was continued for nearly another century with its endowment of £25 7s. 2d., but towards the end of the 18th century the building erected by Boniface Savage fell into decay, and lay vacant for several years.

In 1790 a petition to the Crown resulted in the endowment being augmented out of the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster, and a new charter granted 13th February, 1792 (George III.), under which the school was resuscitated as the "King's School."

With an endowment of about £50 a year the school struggled on for another half century, but by the time of the "School's Inquiry Commission of 1867," the buildings had become quite out of date, so that it is not surprising to find that there were then in the school only some 20 boys.

A scheme under the Endowed School Act was approved

by Queen Victoria in Council 17th May, 1879, but being unaccompanied by any increase of endowment (which the Commissioners had no power to bestow) produced no result, and the school, which had been closed in 1878, remained unoccupied, and was sold in 1880.

Nine years later, however, the Governors bestirred themselves to obtain the disused Militia Barracks, with the large drill ground attached, and built the present school on the site. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on petition increased the endowment to £100 a year.

The Governors secured an able master in the Rev. Thomas Howey Nichols, M.A., formerly scholar of St. Catherine's College, Cambridge. Since the advent of Mr. Nichols the Pontefract King's School has been enlarged, equipped with the latest appliances, and has taken its place among the most successful Grammar Schools of Yorkshire.

KING'S SCHOOL, PONTEFRACT

In existence in time of Rufus, 1087—1100. Refounded by Edward VI., 1542. Re-opened May-Day, 1890.

CHAPTER XIX.

———o———

" Through Pomfret Park no longer stray
The graceful hart and hind ;
Its ancient oaks have passed away,
—The giants of their kind.
Extinct the Lacy's noble race,
Those men of might and mark :
No more they gaily head the chase
Through Pomfret Park. *John Wilson.*

Survey of Pontefract Park in 1588.

The extensive tract of land forming Pontefract Park was, in Pre-Norman Times, mainly waste moorland, forest and fenny marshes. When the De Lacies became proprietors, a portion was surrounded by a foss and paled, and used as a deer forest. What it was like in Tudor Times may be gathered from a Survey, under the duchy seal, dated 9th June, 1588 (30th Elizabeth). The following abridged copy contains the gist of the Report of the Surveyors :—

" 1. The said park is distant from Pontefract Castle half a quarter of a mile, but how long the same hath been a park we cannot tell, but so far as we have heard said, it was some time called Pontefract Moor.

2. The whole circuit of the pales include 700 acres, whereof we think there is none may be employed for meadow, 100 acres for arable ground, and all the rest for pasture.

3. We say that every of the 100 acres of arable land, and every acre of pasture, is worth by the year 12d.

4. There is in the pales of the said park, 1370 timber trees whereof we think 400 of the best is worth 10s. a piece ; other 400 of the

next sort worth 6s. 8d. a piece, and the rest 5s. a piece. In fuel trees 1760, whereof 500 of the best are worth to be sold at 6s. 8d. a piece; of the second sort other 500 at 5s. a piece, and the rest 3s. 4d. a piece. Also 400 saplings are worth 16d. a piece.

5. There are no manner of mines to our knowledge.

6. There is growing within the precincts of the said park certain underwood . . . . worth to be sold at £60.

7. There was in the said park in anno primo of the queen majesty's reign 300 deer, and at the present 595, viewed by William Mallet, John Tindall and Robert Hippon, keepers there and others.

8. We find that George, lord Talbot, hath the said park by indenture, under the seal of the Duchy of Lancaster, paying thereof by year £4 3s. 4d.; and further, that the town and inhabitants of Pontefract and Tanshelf hath, by custom, common in the said park, with their horses and kine yearly, time out of man's mind, from the feast of St. Ellen unto the feast of St. Michael, and so hath at this present, paying yearly therefor to the herbager of the said park, for every cow 12d., and for every horse or mare 2s. for the whole jist, and for a cow if she lie in the park nightly 16d., for a swine in pannage-time 4d.; and further, the queen's majestie's tenants or copyholders of Carleton, Hardwicke and Tanshelf have common in a close called Carleton Close in the said park, with their draught oxen yearly from the said feast of St. Ellen unto the feast of St. Michael, paying yearly therefor, for every beast 4d., for the which custom and common the said tenants are bound by the tenure of their lands to carry the queen's timber and other to her highness's castle or mills, and further saith, that the farmer of the said Manor of Hardwicke had had time out of man's mind, common in the said park yearly, in winter and in summer, for 60 beasts and 10 horses, also in pannage-time swine without number, for which custom the late priory of St. Oswald, before the dissolution of that house, hath paid to the keepers of the said park, 6 quarters of wheat, and to the palace 4 quarters, and since thence the dissolution thereof, the receiver there hath paid yearly in respect of the said wheat £3 6s.8d. until now of late; and also says that the farmer of the capital messuage of Houghton, called Houghton Hall, had in the said park common for 16 beasts and 4 horses, from the feast of St. Ellen unto Michaelmas yearly, and also hath had one key of custom delivered unto him by the keeper of the said park, of one gate called Houghton Carr Gate, for the driving out of their cattle, paying yearly unto the said keeper at the delivery of the said key 4d., and in pannage-time swine without number.

9. There is builded in the said park three lodges or houses, whereof two are in good reparation, and the third partly in decay . . . . also there is a barn builded in the said park to lye hay in that is gotten for the deer, the reparation whereof is at the queen's charges.

10. There is in the said park one close called the New Close, another called Vicar's Close, and another called Carr Close, now granted

by indenture to William Mallet esq for the exchequer, but aforetime belonging to the late dissolved monastery of St. John in Pontefract.

11. The same is a princely park, and meet before another to be preserved.

During this reign there was established the "Council of the North," consisting of a Lord President and 7 Councillors. Each district had its appointed officers to collect the rents and other revenues belonging to the Crown, and also special officers for exceptional duties. We find in contemporary records such entries as—"Receaver for the Honor of Pomfret, and the late College and Chauntrey landes, fee paied xxxvili. xiijs. iiijd." (£36 13s. 4d.)

The Receiver in this instance was a Richard Ramshare of Pontefract. When Sir Thomas Wentworth held the office of Lord President under Charles I. it is of some local interest to know that he purchased Ledston Hall from the Withams, and made it his official residence.

Dr. Bramhall.

One Pontefract man, born in 1593, afterwards rose to great eminence; we refer to Dr. John Bramhall, an eminent ecclesiastic. He studied at Sydney College, Cambridge, and, after taking his degree in arts, became chaplain to Archbishop Matthews of York. His first preferments were two prebends, one of York and the other of Ripon. He became Bishop of Derry in 1634, and during Lord Wentworth's administration of Irish affairs was employed by that statesman in reforming ecclesiastical abuses.

On the fall of Wentworth in 1642, Dr. Bramhall escaped to the Continent, and remained abroad, in close connection with the exiled Stuarts, until the Restoration of 1660, when he returned and was created Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland. He died in 1668.

James I. at Pontefract.

In 1603 Pontefract Castle had the honour of entertaining within its walls James I., in the course of his royal progress from Scotland to take possession of the English throne.

The same year the Plague again appeared in the town,

and raged violently during the winter of 1603-4, claiming upwards of 200 victims. The following extract from the West Riding Session Rolls, shows that the authorities made some efforts to prevent contagion :—

> "Sellers of ale and beare in the open streets, to passengers and travellers, travyling on the high roade between Doncastre and Ferribrigg, to the great danger of infecting the inhabitants with the contagion of the plague now in this dangerous tyme of sickness and visitation, because they enterteyne and discourse with all manner of passengers and travellers, wanderers and idle beggars.
>
> Restrayned by order of the Court."

Among the State Papers of James I. (November, 1608) appears a description of the Honor of Pontefract, according to a recent Survey, with entries relating to the nature of the various tenures, and the feasibility of obtaining increased rents :—

> "The Honor of Pountfrett consists of eighteen Manors, whereof foure of the best are in joincture to the Queen, therefore not surveyed by me. The copihold rent of the rest amounts to £400 or thereabouts.
>
> The rents are rated higher than Wakefield.
>
> Their fynes arbitrable as Wakefield.
>
> The soile nor tenants so riche, yett well disposed, and may be drawen to convicons answerable to their abilities, and the benefitt they shall r eceave."

Charter of James I.

James I., by a charter dated 2 March, 1605, confirmed with certain modifications the already existing corporate charter of Pontefract. The modified clauses had reference to the method of electing the mayor, which had been the cause of incessant animosity amongst the inhabitants for some years, and the new clauses were designed to remove this contention. The Charter of Henry VII. had provided that the burgesses should assemble in the Moot Hall upon the feast of St. Michael, and there "choose out of themselves 13 of the more reputable sort of men, one of which always then should be chosen for the Mayor."

The charter of James I. sets forth :—

> "We are credibly informed that the election of mayor of the town or borough aforesaid, hath been made by the greater number of votes and suffrages of the burgesses of the said town or borough, by reason of

which sort of form and manner of election, infinite contentions, animosities and disputes have arisen, and been propagated betwixt the mayor and burgesses . . . by means whereof, very often great hatred, revenge and resentments, and many other evils have ensued to the disturbance of our peace, and exceeding bad example of others. Know ye, therefore, that we have willed and granted that the election of the mayor of the said borough in every year shall be upon the feast day of Holy Rood, that is to say, in and upon the 14th day of September, in the manner and form in these presents prescribed . . . every burgess of the town or borough shall write himself, or cause to be written upon a small piece or scroll of paper, in English, his suffrage and vote, and the said scroll of paper, together with the said suffrage and vote inscribed thereupon, shall be put into a certain bag or box for this kind of business to be provided . . . which said scroll of paper shall not contain the name of the person giving his vote and suffrage, but the inscription thereupon shall be in the manner and form following, that is to say; 'On the 14th day of September, in the year of our Lord—such a person is elected mayor of this town or borough'—and that always the day and year and name of the person so to be appointed mayor as aforesaid, must be named and specified thereupon."

Honour of Pontefract as the dowry of Queen Anne.

James I. visited Pontefract Castle again in 1616, and three years later issued an amended grant by which the Honor of Pontefract was made the "Joynture" of the queen consort. The following copied from the State papers of James I., is the record of this new grant:—

"The king grants . . . . all our Honor of Pontefract in the County of Yorke and other counties wheresoever that honnour extendeth, and all the demeasne castles, mannors, Townes, hamlets, forrests, chases, parkes, vicarrages, wards, granges, farme rentes . . . . beeing p'cell or member or reputed p'cell or member of the sd Honr of Pontefract . . . viz all those Or Townes of Pontefract with the appurtnances in the said Countie of Yorke. And all the severall Baliwickes of the East, South, West and North Pontefract, and all those Or Mannrs of Tanshelfe and Carleton, Ackworth, Allerton, Altofts, Kypas, Warnefeld, Berwicke, Scoales, Roundhay, Elmeshall, Camsall, Onston, Knottyngley, Kredlyng, Beghall, Rothewell, Leedis, Marshdon, and Almondbury . . . and all other lands within the honr and towne aforesaid, of the yearlie valeu of 13li. 6s. 8d. or thereabouts, belonging to ye said honnour, which said honr of Pontefract and the prmisses are p'cell of the possessions of Or Duchie of Lancaster.—Dated at Westminster 11th Octobre, 17th Jacobi, 1619."

The Duchy Mills.

Soon after Ilbert de Lacy became possessed of the Honor of Pontefract, he built several corn-mills on the banks of the Aire in the

neighbourhood of Fryston and Knottingley, and at a later date, when windmills were introduced, Henry de Lacy erected a stone windmill for grinding corn, on the rising ground east of the Castle. These mills were known as the "Soke Mills," the right of soke comprising the privilege of grinding all the grain of the surrounding district. When the Honor of Pontefract became annexed to the Duchy of Lancaster in the 14th century, these mills became known as the Duchy Mills, and were let out to tenants to farm at a yearly rent. When the Duchy became merged in the crown in the 15th century, we find from contemporary rent-lists that the ancient Soke mills were then known as the Royal Duchy Mills.

Subsequently other windmills sprang up around Pontefract and some of the inhabitants gradually began to make use of these as being easier of access, for we find that in 1623 a complaint was made by the officers of the Duchy of Lancaster, that certain persons were taking their corn to be ground at these new mills to the injury of the revenue derived from the royal mills at Knottingley, whereupon the king issued a proclamation to the inhabitants prohibiting them from using the mills at Pontefract. This is dated from Westminster 31st August, 1624.

A short time, however, only appears to have elapsed when the farmers of Pontefract, Tanshelf and Monkhill began to disregard the royal injunction. In consequence of this, the Attorney-General presented a bill of information into the Court of Chancery at Westminster, against William Tatham, late Mayor of Pontefract, John Ward, William Ellis, Bartholomew Whorewood, John Combe and others. The defendants pleaded that they were bound of right and duty to grind their corn at the ancient stone windmill in Pontefract, the said windmill, with its royalties, rents and profits, being anciently granted and confirmed to the burgesses of Pontefract for the annual rent of £49 13s. 4d. They also "claimed to be first served when the hopper is empty at Knottingley mills, and to have the best mill there called Bill Mill for themselves, and for which the Mayor of Pontefract hath used, time out of

mind, to give unto the miller there yearly on Christmas Day, a pair of gloves and 4d. in money, or his dinner, as a duty for the said privileges.

The defendants produced ancient decrees under the duchy seal, dated from the reigns of Edward IV. to Queen Elizabeth, which firmly established the ancient usuage. It was ultimately decreed that :—

> "The inhabitants of Pontefract shall not grind their corn at any other mill save at the royal duchy mills at Knottingley and the ancient stone-windmill at Pontefract, provided always that if it shall at any time happen that the said mills at Knottingley stand in hack water, or be in decay, or in want of water, or be overcharged with work so that the inhabitants aforesaid, or any part of them, cannot have their corn ground there within the space of 24 hours after the same be brought to the said mills, then in such cases when it shall so happen, it shall and may be lawful for every such person to take and carry the grist to any other mill to be ground."

Sir John Saville.

In 1625 Charles I., just entered upon his reign, paid a royal visit to Pontefract Castle, a fortress which was destined some nineteen years later to be so intimately associated with his struggle againt the Long Parliament. During this visit Sir John Saville, of Howley, who at this time held the office of High Steward of the Honor of Pontefract, was advanced to the dignity of a haron, under the title of "Lord Saville, baron of Pontefract." He was the first Mayor of the Borough of Leeds, which town was incorporated in 1626, and in honour of this, his crest and supporters, known by the name of "hullarts" or owls, were adopted by the newly created corporation.

It is on record that the celebrated Rubens, during a visit to Lord Saville at Howley Hall, painted for that nobleman the picture "A View of Pontefract." (See Taylor's "Leeds Worthies.")

CHAPTER XX.

"Cry 'Havoc!' and let slip the dogs of war." *Shakespeare.*

The Great Civil War.

During the direful contest between Charles I. and the Long Parliament, Pontefract played a very important part. Its castle sustained three separate sieges, and had the honour of being the last stronghold that held out for the Royalist cause.

The abortive attempt of the king to seize the five leaders of the opposition within the precincts of the House of Parliament was an illegal act, and the signal for civil strife. It was evident that either the law or the prerogative must succumb, and that the pretensions of either party could only be decided by the sword, hence each of the opposing factions began to arm themselves, the king having resource to the old feudal method of raising an army in his defence.

On the 12 August 1642, Charles issued from York his proclamation requiring the aid and assistance of all his subjects north of Trent. On the 22nd he published at Nottingham his Instructions to his Commissioners of Array and set up the Royal Standard.

The following document, circulated throughout the whole neighbourhood, shows that the loyal gentry of these parts

were on the alert to serve their king, as it is dated but five days after the proclamation at York :—

"West Riding, Co. Ebor. To the Constables of . . . . . By virtue of power and authorite from His Sacred Majtie to us and others directed. These are to charge and command you to cause to appeare before his Majetie att the Common Hall in Doncaster, all p'sons whatsoever within your sevrall Constableries between sixteene and sixtie yeares of age, upon Wednesday next, becing the 20th of this instant August, by nyne of the clocke in the morning . . . furnished with their best Armes and abiliments ot warr . . . you are not to faile as you will answer the least neglect at yor and their uttermost p'ill and to be accounted Rebills against his Majtie, enymyes to the good and peace of this kingdome . . . .

Rich Hutton.	Thos : Ingram.	
Hen : Bellas.	Edw : Osburne.	
Marma : Langdale.	Brian Palmer.	
John Ramsden.	Richd Aldburgh.	Coms."

The gentry around the Pontefract district responded nobly to the king's appeal, granting large sums of money for the necessities of the royal cause, besides enlisting men and supplying them with arms. Pontefract Castle became the rendezvous, and was at once garrisoned by a strong force of gentlemen volunteers, with Sir William Lowther, of Great Preston, as Governor.

The names of those gallant defenders who so well fought for the royal cause, have been preserved to us by Nathan Drake, of Godley, in the parish of Halifax, who was one of the defenders and kept a journal of the siege. For his attachment to the fortunes of the king he afterwards lost his estate of Godley. His son, Dr. Samuel Drake, was, after the Restoration, rewarded for his father's loyalty by being presented to the vicarage of Pontefract, which he held until his death nine years later, when he was succeeded by his son the Rev. Francis Drake, who married Elizabeth, daughter of John Dickson, of Pontefract. At his death he was succeeded by his son the Rev. John Drake, the third of the name in succession to hold the living, while a younger son of Francis Drake, born at Pontefract in 1695, became the historian of York.*

* "22 Jan. 1695. Franciocus filius Francisci Drake, vicarii.' (From Register of Baptisms at Pontefract).

Among the 183 gentlemen volunteers comprising the garrison, we find Sir Thomas Bland, of Kippax Park ; Sir John Ramsden, of Byram Park ; three of the Tindalls, of Brotherton ; Richard Bilcliffe, Esq., of Glass Houghton ; three of the Hammertons, of Featherstone ; Cornet Branford, of Methley ; Jarvis Shillito, the Mayor of Pontefract ; and eleven of the fourteen members of the Corporation. Several clergymen were among the defenders, including the Rev. George Beaumont, Rector of South Kirby ; Dr. Bradley,* Rector of Castleford and Ackworth ; also Dr. Collins, Physician, with Mr. Gray and Mr. Parker, Surgeons.

Queen Henrietta visits Pontefract.

The Royalists were mainly victorious in the earlier battles fought in the Midland Counties from Edgehill (Oct. 1642) to Roundaway Downs (July 1643). Meanwhile the Queen, who landed on the Yorkshire coast during 1642, encouraged the northern gentry under the Marquis of Newcastle to uphold the royal cause. She was at York in May, 1643, urging Newcastle to send some of the Yorkshire regiments to the king's assistance. The following extract from Slingsby's Diary† bears on this matter :—

> "Now ye Queen was preparing to march to ye King, and his excellence (Newcastle) wth his army convey'd her to Pomphret, where his excellency caus'd a councell of warr to be caus'd, yt advice might be taken wch were ye most usefull cervice in ye army, whether to march up wth ye Queen and so joyne wth ye King, or else wth ye army to stay, and only give order for some regiments to wait upon her majesty. If he march'd up, his army would give a gallant addition to ye King's, hut yn he left ye country in my Ld Fairfax his power, and it might be he should have him march in ye rear of him, joyne in ye parliaments forces. If he stay'd he might send some forces wth ye Queen, and yet be able to lay siege to my Ld Fairfax in Leeds, or fight him in ye field. Well, this latter was resolved on, of sending some forees only wth ye Queen and himself to stay, and to try ye mastery wth my Ld Fairfax."

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* Thomas Bradley, D.D., Prebend of York, &c., was chaplain to the old Duke of Buckingham, and then to King Charles I., and had the livings of Castleford and Ackworth, then both in the king's gift, presented to him on the 5th March 1631. He married Frances, the youngest daughter of the Right Hon. Lord Savile, Baron of Pontefract, by whom he had several children. Dr. Bradley was a very great sufferer, was twice sequestered and plundered of all that he had, and himself, his lady and all his children turned out of doors to seek their bread in desolate places. He died in 1665, aged 67. (Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy.") George Bradley, Esq., retired solicitor, Aketon Hall, claims to be one of his descendants.

† See Sir Henry Slingsby's Diary, page 95.

The Queen left Pontefract Castle on the 23 June, 1643. During its long history this fortress had often been honoured by the presence of royalty, but Queen Henrietta proved to be the last royal personage to be entertained within its ancient halls.

First Siege of Pontefract Castle.

In June, 1644, was fought the decisive battle of Marston Moor, where Cromwell vanquished the Royalists under Prince Rupert, and took possession of York. From thence he at once despatched troops to besiege and take all the places in the district garrisoned for the king, and thus Pontefract Castle was invested by the Parliamentarians under Colonel Sands, and the first siege of the castle commenced. Some Royalist troops under Sir John Mainy at Skipton hastened to the relief of the Pontefract garrison. The following extract from the diary of Sir Henry Slingsby, who served under Sir John Mainy, we insert because it throws a vivid light upon the aspect of affairs around Pontefract at this stage of the siege. Colonel Sands was encamped between Ferrybridge and Pontefract, when Sir John Mainy arrived upon the scene:—

> "Mainy was resolv'd to fight with Sands, . . . he had drawn up his horse w'thin ye park, and having got ye garison soulgiers in readiness likewise, he causeth his horse to March thro' ye Town (of Pontefract) without stop, and advanceth towards Ferribridg. The enemy was got in readiness likewise, and drawn out on ye side of ye brigge towards Pomphret; Sr John sends a part to charge, and beats ym off their ground by ye help of ye foot soulgiers. They retreat beyond ye brigge, and would make good ye brigge, but Sr John's men animated seeing ym forsake their ground comes wth more courage. The brigge had a turnpike over ye middle of it, weh they had fasten'd. Our men allights from their horses, takes out of a smith's shop a hammer, and breaks open ye turnpike. The enemy drew up again in Brotherton fields, meaning to charge us in ye narrow lane; we fight for ground to fight on, and they to keep (us) in yt straight; and making good our ground we became at last masters of theirs, but fain to seek it thro' gapsteads and places of disadvantage. But having gotten ye field we at once both charg'd ym and put ym to fight, giving chase to ym as far as Sherburn; we took above 50 prisoners, . . . Sr John was lost in ye chase and could not be heard of, till ye next day we heard he lay wound'd at a town 3 or 4 miles off, and going wth a party to fetch him off, we met him coming in a cart."

The strength of the fortress and the courage of the

defenders defied all the efforts of the Parliamentarian forces. Meanwhile Fairfax, having subdued the castles of Helmsley and Knaresborough, marched south, reaching Pontefract on Christmas Day 1644, and joined his forces to the besiegers'.* A letter was sent to the Governor offering terms to the garrison, Lowther replying to the effect that he would defend the castle to the utmost, upon which Fairfax commenced to cannonade the fortress. On the third day, one of the towers fell, but Fairfax did not attempt to storm the breach thus made, judging it more prudent to continue the blockade rather than to sacrifice his men to such a desperate enterprise.

On the 22 January 1645 Fairfax took his departure, leaving Major-General Poyntz and Colonel Lambert in charge of the operations. The besiegers began to mine, but were met by counter mines. Towards the end of February the garrison found themselves in great straits for provisions and ammunition, and sent to the King, who was then at Oxford, for assistance. The King at once despatched Sir Marmaduke Langdale with 1,600 men, who prosecuted their march with such vigour that Doncaster was reached by the 27 February, and, on the morning of March 1st, the watch on the Round Tower of the Castle perceived the relief column marching over Went Hill. Passing through Darrington, Langdale wheeled to the left, drew up his forces on the Chequer Fields, now indicated by the Waterloo Monument, and prepared for action.

Lambert hurled his troops against Langdale without effect, and then fled in general disorder towards Ferrybridge, losing 160 killed and about 100 prisoners. At the bridge over the Aire, Lambert made a stand, but was again compelled to retreat towards Sherburn with a further loss of 140 men and several officers. Returning from the pursuit, Langdale re-provisioned the castle and strengthened the garrison. He also placed a body of cavalry at Featherstone, and another at

* Fairfax is said to have had his headquarters at Carleton in a house since known as Fairfax Cottage.

Houghton under his nephew Langdale Sunderland,* and on the 3 March returned southwards by Doncaster and Newark, engaging in several successful skirmishes with the Parliamentary forces which attempted to intercept him. Thus ended the first siege of Pontefract Castle.

Second Siege of Pontefract Castle.

Being now masters of the situation, the garrison made several excursions from the castle, bringing in ample supplies; but this state of tranquility did not last long, as the Parliamentarians again collected their scattered forces, and the garrison was destined to sustain another siege, longer and more tedious than the first. Towards the end of March, Fairfax suddenly reappeared on the scene. Crossing the river at Castleford under cover of night, he fell upon Sunderland's troops at (Glass) Houghton, and routed them, capturing many prisoners and most of the horses. Again the castle was invested. Taking possession of Monkhill and Baghill, the besiegers dug trenches and erected strong earthworks, to prevent which, frequent sallies were made by the garrison, and some desperate skirmishes took place.

The month of April passed, during which the garrison had inflicted severe losses upon the besiegers, but had themselves also sustained serious loss of men who could ill be spared. Early in May the besiegers were further strengthened by a body of troops under the command of Sir John Saville of Methley; thus the losses of the besiegers were being constantly made good, while the garrison was gradually being diminished by deaths and casualties, but the defenders were buoyed up

* Langdale Sunderland, of High Sunderland, near Halifax, and afterwards of Aketon Hall, was the son of Abraham Sunderland, said to have died in Pontefract Castle during the first siege. Langdale Sunderland served under his uncle at Marston Moor, and afterwards distinguished himself in several engagements. Under the Commonwealth he was compelled to dispose of his Halifax estates in order to discharge his composition to the Parliament; with the remnant of the purchase money he bought the Aketon estate, and lived there until his death in 1698, and was buried in Featherstone Church, where his tombstone may still be seen. His grandson, Peter Sunderland, afterwards sold the Aketon estate to Edward Winn, Esq., from whom it descended to Mark Winn, Esq., of Nostell Priory. We are informed on the highest authority that the direct descendants of Langdale Sunderland are at the present time holding high public positions in the Colony of New Zealand.

with the expectation that the efforts of the Royalists to relieve them would again be successful.

On the 18 May, the garrison by a bold sally captured a number of cattle belonging to the enemy, and drove them into the castle. The same evening a reinforcement of 600 horse and foot joined the besiegers ; on the 26 May, they received a further addition of 150 men, who came by way of Ferrybridge and entrenched themselves near the New Hall, while Sir John Saville's division took up a position behind the ridge in the park. Being now completely surrounded, all efforts to obtain fresh provisions were frustrated, and the garrison began to suffer many privations in consequence.

Throughout the long summer days, the watchmen posted on the Round Tower of the Castle eagerly scanned the southern horizon for the long-expected relief, but Langdale came not. On the 29th of May, by a successful stratagem, the garrison secured another haul of 130 head of cattle, which were driven into the castle by way of Carleton, while the main strength of the defenders were engaging the enemy round Monkhill. During these operations, the inhabitants of the town suffered greatly ; it was almost a daily occurrence for some peaceful citizen to be killed or wounded by stray shots from both parties. The case of the garrison was gradually becoming hopeless, though the gallant Governor continued to animate the enthusiasm of his men to hold out for the King.

On the 16th of June General Poyntz transmitted a letter under a flag of truce to Lowther, informing him of the decisive battle of Naseby, and urging him to surrender the castle while there was hope of mercy. The Governor bluntly refused, and sent a verbal answer to Poyntz to the effect that "he neither valued his forces or his mercy," and so the siege continued, the cannonade daily becoming more galling, and the fighting strength of the garrison becoming daily reduced in numbers. Lowther appears to have discredited the story of Naseby fight, and, happy in his incredulity, still expected that he would be again relieved.

The garrison at this stage began to suffer acutely ; they were wholly destitute of fresh provisions, and this produced its natural effect. On the 30 June, the besiegers held a Council of War on Brotherton Marsh, after which they departed in companies to different positions. One company remained at Ferrybridge, another was stationed at Knottingley, and a body of 400 marched up towards Pontefract, wheeling off into the fields beyond Baghill. The enemy relieved their guard at New Hall with 600 infantry, and different bodies of men were in motion in other directions, which led the Governor to conclude that they now seriously intended to carry the castle by assault. On the 1st July the besiegers received a further reinforcement of 2,000 well-disciplined troops.

The garrison looked in vain for Langdale's troops, little aware that that general was powerless to render assistance. The disastrous battle of Naseby had shattered the king's forces and destroyed the last hope of the besieged, now so closely invested that egress was rendered impossible.

On the 15 July General Poyntz again sent a summons to surrender, offering to treat upon honourable terms, which Lowther now considered it prudent not to reject. After several attempts at negotiation, in which the garrison gave signal proof that their spirit was not broken, or their loyalty abated, and that they valued their honour more than their lives, a committee from the garrison, consisting of Sir Richard Hutton, Sir Thomas Bland, and Sir John Ramsden, was sent under a flag of truce to settle conditions of surrender (19 July). During the negotiations, which lasted several days, the soldiers of the garrison entered into social intercourse and friendly games with the besiegers. The treaty was at last signed, the garrison evacuated the castle, and the Parliamentarians took possession. Thus terminated the second siege of Pontefract Castle, during which the Parliamentarians lost in killed 469 soldiers, whilst the besieged lost 99 persons.

The local gentry who had assisted in the defence of the

castle, obtained permission to return to their homes, but they continued to be closely watched by the Parliament, and were all heavily fined for their obstinate adherence to the Royalist cause. The names of the following local gentlemen appear in the list of those who thus paid for their loyalty :—

	£
Sir Thomas Beaumont of Whitley Hall, fined ...	700
Sir Thomas Bland of Kippax Park, ,, ...	405
Sir William Lowther of Great Preston ,, ...	200
Francis Neville of Chevit ,,	1,000
Richard Oates, Alderman of Pontefract ,, ...	22
William Stables, ,, ,, ,, ...	12
John Tatham, ,, ,, ,, ...	114
William Tatham, ,, ,, ,, ...	75
Thomas Stile of Kellington ,, ...	100
William Thompson of Brotherton ,, ...	109
Sir Thomas Wentworth of Woolley ,, ...	3,188
Sir John Wolstenholme of Nostell Priory ,,	10,000*

For nearly two years the Parliamentary forces held the castle under General Poyntz and Colonel Copley.

In October, 1645, the king sent a portion of his shattered forces under the command of Sir Marmaduke Langdale and Lord Digby to join the royalists from Scotland. Making a detour from Doncaster, they reached Ferrybridge, the only crossing place of the river, where they encountered the Parliamentary forces who sallied from Pontefract.

Sir Henry Slingsby, who accompanied Langdale has recorded this skirmish in his diary :—

> "At Sherburne we were overtaken by ye Yorkshire horse command'd by Coll. Copley, made over secure by their present success, having taken and made prisoners all their foot, to ye number of 800 men which lay in Sherburne ; and before our horse could be drawn out of ye town, the enemys horse appears on this side Milford ; they must fight ym wth so many as they could make ready : and at ye first charge beats Copley, but being receiv'd by Coll. Lilbourne and not second'd by ours, they were put to ye worst and so quite rout'd, leaving dead

* Sir John Wolstenholme carried plate valued at £10,000 to York for the use of the King, for which the Parliament fined him an equal amount.

upon ye spot about 40, whereof Sr Richard Hutton was one, and Coll. Carnaby and others. Those wch escaped fled to Skipton, but Captn Robert Slingsby being sore wound'd was left at Abaforth (Aberford) where he had his wounds dress'd and cur'd. . . . . I tarry'd about a month at Heselwood, and kept in so privately yt I was not seen of any. And I went to my own house; I took ye night time for it, and in ye night return'd, scarce any in my own house knowing yt I was there; so after I had satisfy'd myself wth one days stay, and taken £40 in Gold, I resolv'd to go back to Newark . . . ."

The following is a copy of General Poyntz's letter to the Honorable William Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons, giving his version of this skirmish:—

"Sir,—Our news is very joyful, even the defeat of near 2,000 men under the command of Lord Digby, having taken near 1,000 foot of mine near Ferry Briggs, my horse under the command of Colonel Copley fell suddenly upon them, and not only released the foot, but God gave us an absolute victory. . . . You shall hear further from me by the next that offers so much happiness to your friend to serve you.

Sydenham Poyntz."

The following is a copy of Colonel Copley's letter to the Honourable Commissioners for War:—

"Honoured Gentlemen,—The enemy last night beat up our guard: to Ferrybrig this day 15 Oct. 1645: took all our foot at Sherburne: we pursued, charged them at the Town's end, routed them, but not without the rout of some of our men. And so the Lord hath given us the victory, many prisoners are taken, we are yet in the pursuit, we have redeemed all our foot; this is all for the present, from your most humble servant,

Christopher Copley."

For his success in this enterprise, the Parliament voted £40 to Colonel Copley.

In 1648 the second Civil War broke out. The Royalists appointed Lord Digby Lieutenant-General of the North, with Sir Marmaduke Langdale as his second. The gentry of these parts once more took up arms for the king, and Pontefract was again destined to witness some stirring and anxious times.

CHAPTER XXI.

—o—

" Look round this vast and venerable place,
Whose ruined pile still shines with awful grace,
Yet nobly great, 'midst all its faded charms :
See the wide waste of all-consuming age,
The wreck of ruthless wars, and hostile rage,
And all the dire effects of cruel wars." *Anon.*

Pontefract Castle seized by the Royalists.

We are now to narrate an event in connection with the Castle of the most singular and romantic character. For the main facts we are indebted to the account from the pen of Captain Thomas Paulden, a Pontefract man who took a prominent part in those stirring and warlike times.*

The chief actor in this drama was Colonel John Morris,† of South Elmsall, a young man of 29 years, who had formerly served under the great Earl Strafford at Ledston Hall, and subsequently in Ireland. He was a man of a chivalrous and daring character joined to the most consummate address, and had the boldness to attempt, and the skill to achieve, the most desperate undertakings.

Fairfax, who on the surrender of the castle in 1646, received the appointment of Governor, had chosen a Colonel Cotterel as his deputy, a man evidently unfit for the position as subsequent events proved. Of this Morris seems to have been aware, and he therefore formed the resolution of

* Paulden's account was written in 1702, i.e. 54 years after the seige of the Castle. He was then in the 78th year of his age. The account was reprinted in 1716 "for the benefit of his widow."

† The name is variously written as Morris, Morrice, and Marris. In his letter offering to surrender the Castle, the original of which we have carefully examined and transcribed, he signs himself John Marris.

Col. John Morris.

surprising the castle and holding it for King Charles. Having put himself in secret communication with a band of local Royalists, who were wont to assemble under the roof of the Rev. George Beaumont, Rector of South Kirkby, he commenced operations by insinuating himself into the favour of Cotterel, and by the most refined duplicity he so far succeeded that he became possessed of his confidence.

The guard of the castle consisted of 100 men, the majority of whom slept in the town. Morris, having won over to his purpose Major Ashby, Ensign Smyth, and Sergeant Floyd, three members of the garrison, got his scaling ladders in readiness, and his forces within call. A night was appointed for the attempt, on which one of his confederates would be on the night-watch, but this fellow getting drunk was displaced by another who gave the alarm, and the whole scheme was frustrated ; Morris and his companions made a precipitate retreat, leaving the scaling ladders behind. Nothing daunted at this failure, he actually made it the groundwork of his future success. Finding he was not suspected, he was next day in the castle with the deputy-governor, expressing his concern at the attempt, advising greater vigilance, and recommending that the men hitherto billeted in the town should now sleep in the castle, and that beds should be ordered to be brought in for that purpose.

About six o'clock the following morning, Morris, accompanied by nine Royalist officers disguised as peasants, but having arms concealed about them, appeared at the castle gate with carts loaded with beds and provisions. The drawbridge was lowered and the goods delivered to the guard, while money was given to some of the soldiers to fetch ale from the town. During their absence, Morris and his companions attacked and mastered the main guard, secured the deputy-governor, and made way for their confederates to enter.

These consisted of 30 horse and 500 foot, who unanimously elected Morris as Governor of the castle. Having regained this important fortress, the Royalist garrison soon became more formidable than it had ever been, and made frequent

sallies into the country far and wide, bringing in large stores of supplies.

While these events were proceeding, General Rainsborough had been elected Governor of Pontefract Castle by the Parliament, and with a small force was proceeding northwards. He had reached Doncaster, when news arrived at Pontefract that their old general, Sir Marmaduke Langdale, had been captured by his enemies, and lay a prisoner at Newark. The garrison at once organised a scheme to seize Rainsborough, and exchange him as a prisoner of war for Langdale. A party of 22 daring spirits under command of Captain William Paulden,* a Pontefract man, undertook this hazardous enterprise. Leaving the castle about midnight on the 31st of October, they reached Mexborough before daylight, and sent forward spies to ascertain if the road was clear. About daybreak the party reached Doncaster, and, professing to be the bearer of letters from Cromwell, obtained access to Rainsborough's lodgings, quietly made him a prisoner and conducted him into the street. Disdaining to be so easily overcome, he began to resist and call for his guards; in the conflict which ensued Rainsborough was slain, upon which the whole party remounted their horses before the troops of the fallen general had time to collect, and took the shortest course to Pontefract.

Third Siege of Pontefract Castle.

Cromwell, having by this time subdued Scotland, marched his Ironsides southward. He had reached Newcastle when the disconcerting news about Pontefract arrived, upon which he hastily despatched a flying column to commence a siege of the castle. A fortnight later Cromwell himself arrived upon the scene, first taking up his quarters at Byram Park until his reserves came up. That Cromwell first took up his quarters at Byram Hall is certain, as from the following extract from "The King's Pamphlets" we find him there on the 4th November, 1648, transacting important business: —

"Cromwell is at Byram House, near Pontefract, and there con-

* William Paulden subsequently died of a fever in the Castle, a month before it was surrendered.

tinues, till he hath so settled the several posts as that the enemy may not, as they have done, break forth, plunder, and undo the country."

Doubtless there was some special reason for his first making choice of Byram Park as his lodging: he knew the desperate character of the garrison, who, despite the bristling entrenchments by which they were surrounded, made light work of spiriting away the neighbouring gentry from their beds at midnight, and the fate of Rainsborough at Doncaster was too fresh in his memory to take any risks. Byram, therefore, with the well-guarded pass of Ferrybridge between him and the Castle, was the safest place until he had settled the several posts, after which he moved on to Knottingley which he made his headquarters, and from thence he addressed the following letter to Colonel John Morris :—

"Sir,—Being come hither for the reduction of this place, I thought fit to summon you to deliver your garrison to me for the use of the Parliament. Those gentlemen and soldiers with you may have better terms than if you hold it to extremity. I expect your answer this day, and rest your servant, Oliver Cromwell."

Morris's answer to this summons was a blunt refusal, and the guns of the besiegers at once began to batter the fortress. For a month Cromwell remained before the castle, without making any serious impression on its walls or its garrison. In Carlyle's "Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell," are five long letters from Cromwell dated from Knottingley, dealing with the incidents of the siege and other matters relating to the affairs of Parliament and the disposal of the King, now a prisoner at Carisbrook Castle. We insert the following because, indirectly, it gives us a glimpse of the condition of the district at this period :—*

"For the Right Honourable the Committee of Lords and Commons, sitting at Derby House: These present.

Knottingley, near Pontefract,
15 Nov., 1648.

"My Lords and Gentlemen,

So soon as I came into these parts, I met with an earnest desire from the Committee of this County to take upon me the charge here, for the reducing of the Garrison at Pontefract . . . . I have had

* It will be observed that Carlyle, in editing Cromwell's Letters, modernised the orthography.

sight of a Letter to the House of Commons, wherein things are so represented, as if the Siege were at such a pass that the prize were already gained. In consideration whereof, I thought fit to let you know what the true state of this Garrison is, as also the condition of the country, that you may not think demands for such things as would be necessary unreasonable.

My Lords, the Castle hath been victualled with Two hundred and twenty or forty fat cattle, within these three weeks; and they have gotten in, as I am credibly informed, salt enough for them and more. So that I apprehend they are victualled for a twelvemonth. The men within are resolved to endure to the utmost extremity; expecting no mercy, as indeed they deserve none. The place is very well known to be one of the strongest inland Garrison in the kingdom; well watered; situated upon a rock in every part of it, and therefore difficult to mine. The walls are very thick and high, with strong towers; and if battered, very difficult of access, by reason of the depth and steepness of the graft.

The country is exceedingly impoverished; not able to bear free-quarter; nor well able to furnish provisions if we had moneys. The work is like to be long, if materials be not furnished answerable.

I therefore think it my duty to represent unto you as followeth:—viz., That moneys be provided for Three complete regiments of Foot, and Two of Horse; that moneys be provided for all contingencies which are in view, too many to enumerate. That Five-hundred Barrels of powder, Six good Battering-guns, with Three-hundred shot to each gun, be speedily sent down to Hull;—we desire none may be sent less than demi-cannons. We also desire some match and bullet. And if it may be, we should be glad that two or three of the biggest Mortar-pieces with shells may likewise be sent, ... I have not as yet drawn any of our Foot to this place; . . . . . these parts being not well able to bear them, ... and indeed I would not satisfy myself nor my duty to you and them. To put the poor men, at this season of the year, to lie in the fields, before we be furnished with shoes, stockings and clothes, for them to cover their nakedness—which we hear are in preparation, and would (should) be speeded:—and until we have deal-boards to make them courts-of-guard, and tools to cast-up works to secure them.

These things I have humbly represented to you; and waiting for your resolution and command, I rest, your most humble servant,

Oliver Cromwell." *

The following was addressed to Colonel Morris:—

"Knottingley, ye 11th November, 1648.

Sir,—The bearer, Mrs. Gray, is desirous to goe into ye castle to see a brother of hers who lyes sick in ye castle; I desire you would let her have a Drumme and give her your pass to returne within a limited time, I rest, Sr. yr. very humble servt., O. Cromwell."

The following gives us a glimpse of the hardships suffered

* See Carlyle's "Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell."

by the civil inhabitants around this district, who had soldiers billeted upon them during this long and trying winter of 1648-9 :—

"ffor the honoble Col. Charles Fairfax at Pontefract.—The bearer has been with me complaining exceedingly of her poverty, as not able to get victuals for her familye, and yet is forced to maintain sold (soldiers) much beyond her ability. I desire that what favour can be afforded her, you would doe it. At the desire of your humble servt.,
Oliver Cromwell,"

The members of the garrison, despite their privations, could at times indulge in facetious banter with their enemies, as witness the following letter from one of the officers in the castle to Colonel Charles Fairfax, who commanded the division occupying Baghill :—

"Sr,—You sent us shells before you sent me egges—my hearty thanks to you for them, and ye rather yor shells haveing not done us soe much harm as one of yor egges will doe mee good, blessed be god ; Sr, I have sent you money for them, and ye allmanacke by this Drumme, and shall crave yor pardon if when these fourteene egges are spent, I send for ye rest of ye shilling's worth promised, hoping they will prove to be three a penny at ye least."

A few weeks later, affairs in Parliament had reached such a crisis, that the presence of Cromwell was urgently required at Westminster, so he took his departure from this neighbourhood, leaving Major-General Lambert to carry on the siege.

Amid all this strife and turmoil of battle daily waged by the opposing armies that were besieging the Castle on the one hand, and defending it on the other, it is strange to find that the old horse races continued to be run within sight of the Castle, as if no such dread thing as war existed. Our information is gleaned from letters written from Pontefract to Captain Adam Baynes, of Knostrop, Leeds (one of the officers of the Commonwealth army), by his brother, Robert Baynes, who was with the beseiging forces.

"To Captain Adam Baynes,
At ye Kinge's Heade, in Gray's Inn Lane, London.

Lov'd Brother,—Haveing so fit an opportunity, I thought fit to certifie you that the Races is within 14 days after Candlemas.

Therefore I desire to know yor pleasure concerning yor horse, whether he should run or not. I ca'not informe you what horses will

be there, only Mr. Chambers' grey horse which run last year, is come thither againe—I remayne, yor ever-loving brother,
Pontefract, 12 Jan., 1648. Robt. Baynes."

Despite the daily onslaughts of the two opposing parties upon each other, preparations for the coming races were being pushed forward; again Robert Baynes writes to his brother:—

"Feb. 3rd.

Loving Brother.—I have received 2 letters from you by Lieutenant Leavens, wherein you give an answer concerning yor horse. There is 7 or 8 horses to run, but we shal I think come in a good place at the worst. Yor man, Henry, hath no mind to ride, for he is above weight, so I think I shall get Corporal Rooke."

The next letter conveys the information that that day was the one chosen by the Parliamentarians to parley with the besieged Royalists for surrender.

"Loving Brother,—I received yors of Feb 6th. with some colleflower seeds . . . . . For the young horses I ride the bay colt. I have taken up the white colt a month ago, ... The races were put off for a month by Major-General's orders, ... Yor ever loving brother, Robert Baynes.
Pont. March 9."

In another letter addressed to Adam Baynes, from Col. Robert Lilburne, who was one of the signatories of King Charles's death warrant, Lilburne, amongst other news says:—

"Sir . . . . Mr. Margetts being coming with the news of the surrender of the Castle will acquaint you more fully with particulars than I can write; that I should not need to trouble you with repetitions; nor would I willingly be the relater of bad success yor horse had at the course. The chief news is now that the Grand Jury at York, and others, are about petitioning to get this Castle pulled down . . . . Yor very assured friend and servante,
Pontefract 24 Mar 1648. Robt. Lilburne."

Brief as is the information contained in the above letters, they are of interest as proving the antiquity of Pontefract Races.

When the news of the execution of the king (30 Jan. 1648 old style) subsequently reached Pontefract Castle, the garrison at once proclaimed his son, and the Governor caused some shillings to be minted, these being the first coinage struck for

Charles II. They are of an octagonal shape, inscribed on the obverse :—

"POST : MORTEM : PATRIS : PRO : FILIO"

[After the death of the father (we are) for the son.]

and on the reverse :—

"Carolꝰ II. D : G : MAG : B : F : ET : H : REX.

A correspondence between the Rev. George Beaumont, of South Kirkby, and Colonel John Morris, was discovered by the besiegers, who promptly seized the clergyman, and executed him before the Castle.

Notwithstanding the loyalty and bravery of the garrison, Lambert kept such a close grip upon the fortress that the besieged at length began to entertain but faint hope of final success. The garrison, which at the commencement of the siege numbered about 600 men, was reduced by the casualities of war to 100, many of whom were unfit for duty on account of wounds and disease.

Towards the end of February Morris was forced to realize that he was engaged on a hopeless task, and at length brought himself to approach his enemies respecting terms in the event of a surrender.

The following letter (the original of which is now in the possession of Robert D. Ryder, Esq., J.P., of Pontefract) was sent by Morris to one of the Parliamentary officers :—

"For Colonell Charles Fairefax.
theise.

Sr,—Since the time I first received a Sum'ons from Leiften't Genr'll Cromwell; I doe not conceive I have ever Shewed my selfe and so perverse or wilfull, as to refuse a Treatie; or to have rendered this place, upon such condic'ons of honor and safety for those w'th mee, as became a souldier: and to that end I have long expected a Su'mons. But being nowe perswaded by those Gent'n I sent out yesterdaie that the Tender must bee on my parte, I am content to remove that Stone; and to that end have herew'th made my addresse to Major Gen'll Lambert: and the rather because you have beene pleased, as you visited yo guardes, to speake to severall Gent'm: over these walles, to yield the castle, whilst they might have good condic'ons, wh'ch by all those that knowe the integrity of yo good disposition is resented as a reall intenc'on in you to avoyde the effusion of more Christian blood, and to ease the further burthen of the country: wherein if you please nowe

to shew yo selfe, what faire waie shalbee proposed by you, shalbee imbraced by, Sr, yo Servt, John Marris."

ultimo Febrnarij.

After considerable time spent over the negociations, Lambert agreed that in the event of a surrender, all excepting six members of the garrison should be permitted to return to their homes.

The articles of capitulation were at length agreed to conditionally, but when the names of the six excepted persons were revealed, the garrison refused to surrender unless Lambert would allow them six more days (during which time they thought the unfortunate six might effect their escape). To this Lambert agreed, providing the members composing the garrison would, at the expiration of six days, engage never again to advise or take up arms against the Parliament.

The six excepted persons were: Colonel John Morris; Captain Allen Austwick, and Cornet Blackbourne, the murderers of Rainsborough; Major Ashby, Ensign Smyth, and Sergeant Floyd, the three traitors who assisted in the surprising and retaking of the Castle from the Parliamentarians.

On the second day the garrison made a vigorous sally, during which Morris and Blackbourne charged through and effected their escape. On the fifth day another sally was made without success, in which Ensign Smyth was killed. His body was recovered and buried in St. Clement's Chapel. The garrison concealed Austwick, Ashby, and Floyd in a passage under one of the towers, with provisions for a month, and implements with which to break through the outer walls of their prison, and on the sixth day (24 March, 1649) the garrison marched out of the Castle, informing Lambert that the six men had already escaped.

It is interesting to know that the three doomed men left concealed in the Castle made good their escape during the following night, fled to the Continent, and all but Austwick lived to return at the Restoration, eleven years later.* Morris

* "I went beyond Sea, and, upon King Charles II.'s Restoration, returned into England, accompanied by my old companion Loyalty, and with the usual companion of that, Poverty." — From Paulden's own account, 1702.

and Blackbourne were not so fortunate ; they were captured near Fleetwood as they were about to enter a ship bound for France, and were brought as prisoners to York.

After a trial, in which the Court treated Morris with a brutality and injustice which can only be matched with the conduct of Judge Jeffries after the Monmouth rebellion, the two Royalists were condemned to death by hanging.

Morris seems to have been not only harshly treated at the time, but maligned afterwards. Even Carlyle speaks of him in his work on "Cromwell," as "A desperate man" and "A highway robber ;" but he was really a man of position, and an honest if somewhat daring and reckless partizan.

On the tombstone of his widow in South Kirkby Church, he is described as "A martyr for his king and country." His body is said to have been buried in Wentworth Church, at his own desire as expressed in his will, "Near to the grave of my worthy lord and master, the late famous Earl Strafford.*

During a recent visit (13 May, 1905) to the old Church at Wentworth, we failed to discover any inscription marking the grave of Col. John Morris. The flat tombstone adjoining the supposed grave of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, has evidently at one time borne a brass tablet. There is a tradition in the village, that this tablet, which disappeared many years ago, recorded the name of Morris.

The interesting and remarkably well-preserved monument on the adjoining wall, is an effigy of Strafford in the attitude of prayer, and bears the following inscription :—

"Thomas Wentworth, Earle of Strafforde,
Visscount Wentworth, Baron Wentworth
of Wentworth Woodhouse, Newmarsh, Overfley
and Raby, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,
Lord President of the North of England, and
Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter.
His birth was upon Good Friday 13th of April 1593.
His death was upon the 12th of May 1641.
His Soule through the Mercy of God lives in eternal blisse,
and his Memory will never dye in these kingdoms."

* See Appendix F.

CHAPTER XXII.

"O ancient fortress, stern and grey,
Majestic even in decay." *John Wilson.*

The Demolition of Pontefract Castle.

No sooner had the garrison agreed to surrender the castle once more into the hands of the Parliamentary forces, than the burgesses of the town generally, who had hitherto stood by the Royalist cause, suddenly declared themselves "well-affected inhabitants" and in sympathy with the Parliament. The town had suffered so heavily during the sieges of the castle, that the inhabitants were weary of the war, and anxious to have the fortress dismantled and thus remove all fear of any further inconvenience from besieging armies taking up their quarters in and around the town. It was inevitable that Pontefract must have suffered heavily in destruction of property, spoilation of goods, and a cessation of trade and commerce.

The following Petition was drawn up at a Town's Meeting held in the Moot Hall, and consigned to Major General Lambert at Knottingley, for transmission to the House of Commons.*

"To the supreame authority of England, the Co'mons assembled in Parliament. The humble peticon of the Major, Aldermen and all well-affected Inhabitants of the Towne of Pontefract.

Humbly sheweth—That the Town of Pontefract since the beginning of these unhappy warres hath beene greatly impoverished and depopulated through the setting and continueing a Garrison in that Castle

* See Holmes's "Pontefract Booke of Entries."

w'ch hath occaconed two severall tedious and chargeable Leagures to the great effusion of much pretious blood, the utter ruinating of no lesse than 200 dwellinghouses and upwards (whose confused heapes are lively and speaking Monuments of the Enemies' cruelty and yo' Peticoners' misery), the incredible decay of tradeing and commerce, the unavoidable hinderance and interrupcon of Tillage, the totall undoing of many well-affected p'sons and families, the sad devastacon of the place of publiq: worshipp amongst us. All w'ch damages sustenied by yo' poore Peticoners amounts unto the full value of 40,000li and upwards, yet hath God through his blessinge upon the unwearied paines of o'r forces there, once more opened a doore of hope for o'Recovery of that Garrison. May it therefore please yo' Hono'rs seriously to consider the sadd desolacons of o' poore Towne, the past and p'sent pressures, yea unsupportable burthens of yo' poore Peticoners by means of the said Garrison, And to appoint the same (immediately upon the Rendicon), to be wholly razed downe and demolished. And further to allott so much of the materialls of Lead and Timber towards the repaireing of o' place of publiq: worship and reedifijng of an habitacon for a Minister as shall amount unto 1,000li. That so the true cause of o' former miseries and future fears being removed, Yo' Peticoners may both he incouraged and inabled to serve yo' hono'rs in all yo' just and equitable comaunds w'th theire lives and fortunes. And yo' Peticoners shall daily pray, &c. Signed in the name and by the consent of the Aldermen and all the well-affected in the Towne of Pontefract, By me,
EDWARD FIELDE, Major."*

This petition appears to have accompanied Lambert's account of the surrender of the Castle to the House of Commons, judging from the following copy of the entry in the "Proceedings in Parliament."

"Die Martis, 27th March, 1649.

Resolved by the Comons assembled in Parliament that this House doth approve the Articles made and agredd upon for the Rendicon of Pontefract Castle.

The humble peticon of the Majo,' Ald' and all the well-affected Inhabitants of the Towne of Pontefract was this day read.—Resolved, That the Castle of Pontefract be forthwith totally demolished. Ordered by the Com'ons assembled in Parliament, That it be referred to the Comittee of the westridd' of the Countie of Yorke to take care that the said Castle of Pontefract be forthw'th totally demolished and levelled to the ground, And the materialls thereof to be p'served from being imbezelled, And by sale of so much of them as wilbee necessary to satisfy in the first place the charge of demolishing and levelling the same, And that so much of the remainder of the materialls as shalbee of the valewe of One thousand pounds be allotted to the Towne of Pontefract, towards the repaireing theire place of publiq: worshipp and reedifijyng an habitacon for a minister. HENRY SCOBELL Cler' Parliament."

* i.e. Mayor.

The demolition of the ancient feudal stronghold was at once commenced under the principal supervision of the Mayor. The buildings were first unroofed, the movable materials sold, and then the towers, walls and ramparts were indiscriminately levelled.

A statement of the costs for dismanting the castle, and the particulars of the materials sold, and to whom sold is still extant,* from which it appears that the moneys received :—

For lead amounted to the sum of			£1540	7	2
,, timber	,,	,,	£201	7	10
,, iron	,,	,,	£37	2	4
,, glass	,,	,,	£1	0	0
	Total		£1779	17	4
The charges for demolishing amounted to			£777	4	6
Monies allotted to the Town of Pontefract			£1000	0	0
Monies due to the Commonwealth			£2	12	10
	Total		£1779	17	4

The cost of its demolition, and the amount realized by the sale of the material, considering the value of money 250 years ago, give us some idea of the strength and proportions of the fortress. The mouldering ruins as we view them at this present time, convey but an imperfect picture of what the castle was like in its pristine grandeur, but as one wanders over the crumbling remains of this once extensive and mighty fabric, imagination comes to our aid, and we may form some vague idea of its former magnificence and strength, while the ruins cannot fail to impress us with the infelicity of former ages, when cruel domestic wars convulsed and desolated the land.

"Again Imagination bids thee rise,
In all thy dread magnificence and power,—
Thy drawbridge, foss and frowning battlements,
Portcullis, barbican and dungeon tower ; . . . .
Nor tread upon these ruins, but we set
Our feet upon some ancient history."

Thus during the eventful year of 1649, fell the famous

* See detailed list in Boothroyd's History ; also in Holmes's "Booke of Entries."

Castle of Pontefract, which for nearly six centuries had played an important part in the history of England.

It had been the stronghold of proud and warlike Norman Barons, the home of the powerful and ambitious Dukes of Lancaster, the residence of princes and kings, the prison of famous captives, and the last stronghold of the Cavaliers. Before its massive walls and towers, thousands had fallen in siege and storm, and one cannot stand upon its ruined walls without feeling that he is upon historic ground, and reflecting upon those anxious times when our ancestors witnessed its walls being battered by the cannon of the Roundheads, with the consequent confusion and suffering of the inhabitants of this ancient borough during that memorable period of civil strife. The war, indeed, had sorely impoverished the people, and one cannot be surprised to find the grim monster—Plague, following close upon this widespread distress. The West Riding Justices found it necessary to levy a rate upon the whole Wapentake of Osgoldcross, in order to relieve the starving victims of the epidemic. Watch and ward were kept at Pontefract, and a weekly allowance of £4, made to the town and smaller sums to Knottingley, Brotherton, and the surrounding villages, which were all more or less infected.*

* See "Papers Relating to the Plague in Yorkshire 1649." Yorks. Archœo. Journal, Vol. xv.

CHAPTER XXIII.

—o—

"Thy boast, my Pomfret, 'tis to be
Made famous by thy loyalty;
In thy proud motto that we see—
'After the death of the father, we
Are for the son.'" *Jehn Wilson.*

With the close of the Great Civil War, and the demolition of the Pontefract Castle, the old town ceased to be a centre of great historic events, hence we have few notices of national interest to record subsequent to this period, and our remaining chapters must he confined to matters chiefly of local interest.

The Pontefract "Booke of Entries," now preserved among the archives of the town, dates from the year 1651. These Records are at first scanty, hut supremely welcome to the historian, as from this source we obtain clearer knowledge of the inhabitants,—what employments they followed: their opinions: the character of many of them: their quarrellings and bickerings: how they lived, and spoke, and went about. We catch stray glimpses of the Revolution of 1689, and of the Jacobite attempts to restore the Stuarts in 1715 and 1745. Tumults, riots, disorders there are in plenty, but never again the least approach to Civil War.

Pontefract under the Commonwealth

Pontefract's Parliamentary Representatives during the last years of Charles I. had been staunch Royalists. The borough was represented in the "Short Parliament" of 1640 by Sir John Ramsden of Byram Park, and Sir George Wentworth of Woolley Park. At the election of the

"Long Parliament" in 1641, the borough returned two members of the Wentworth family, viz., Sir George Wentworth of Woolley Park, and Sir George Wentworth of Wentworth Park, both of whom Parliament declared incapable of acting in 1644, and their places were then taken by two Roundheads in the persons of Col. William White (formerly secretary to Sir Thomas Fairfax, and at the beginning of the Civil War had served as lieutenant in the Earl of Stamford's Regiment under the Earl of Essex), and Henry Arthington (son and heir of William Arthington, Esq., of Nottingham), who was married to Mary, daughter of Ferdinand, Lord Fairfax of Denton-in-Wharfedale.

In 1658 we find these nominees of the Fairfaxes displaced by Major-General Lambert, who ten years earlier had received the surrender of Pontefract Castle ; the other member being a John Hewley. These gentlemen were constituted the representatives of the borough as supporters of the régime of Cromwell, the Lord Protector.

The corporate body comprised men who professed like principles, while the majority of the burgesses, who secretly remained attached to the exiled royal family, were compelled by the fear of pains and penalties to quietly submit to the new order of things, until the inevitable reaction, which, gathering force after the death of Cromwell, culminated in the Restoration of Charles II. in 1660. In the Pontefract "Booke of Entries," under date 14 Sep. 1659 appears the following :— "Ordered that the charge lately expended about the enterteinement of the Lord Lambert, being 5li. 13s. 3d., shalbee discharged out of the publiq : Revenewe of the Towne."

It is significant that the very next entry relates to an assessment of 12li. 16s. 10d. upon the Inhabitants of the Borough to defray the charges of a banquet at the proclaiming of Charles II.

Of Pontefract's two Parliamentary representatives at this period, the one John Hewley disappears from history, whilst Major-General Lambert found himself a prisoner in the hands

of the Royalists, an event which may be said to have terminated his public career, as his remaining years were spent in exile on Guernsey Island, where he died in 1683.

When the Restoration came a new order began; there were many things no Restoration could restore. Monarchy was set up again, and the Church was reinstated, but the scaffold at Whitehall saw the end of more things than one man's life.

The Corporation Act.

In 1661 was passed the Corporation Act, which provided that all municipal officers must take the oath of non-resistance, abjure the Solemn League and Covenant, and receive the Sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. Commissioners were appointed by letters patent to thus regulate all corporate bodies, and in this connection we find that on the 10th September 1662, Leonard Warde, Richard Wildman, and John Drake, for refusing to qualify by taking the oath, and William Oates, John Cooper and Jarvis Cooper, who appear to have held Presbyterian views, were all declared unfit to serve His Majesty, and were therefore removed from their office as Aldermen of Pontefract. Their places were taken by William Wilkinson, Robert Tatham, Richard Austwicke, George Shillitoe, Leonard Stable and Thomas Jackson.

The Hearth Tax Roll.

In 1662 Parliament levied a tax of 2s. upon every hearth, and in order to ascertain how many hearths there were in each inhabited house, the tax-gatherer was empowered to enter every room and make a personal investigation.

This objectionable visit made the tax unpopular and odious, yet it remained in force until the Revolution, when it was abolished in 1689. Then followed a tax of two shillings upon every inhabited house, and, on the repeal of this tax, a window tax was imposed, in the form of a duty upon every window. A graduated scale was adopted, ranging from 2d., the lowest rate upon houses with not more than seven windows,

to 2s., the highest rate upon houses with twenty-five windows and upwards.

This "tax upon light" was abolished as late as 1851.

The following list of householders in Pontefract, who were assessed on the Hearth Tax, is copied from the Exchequer Lay Subsidy Roll of 1662, by T. Horsfall Turner, Esq., of Idle, by whose permission we are able to insert it in this work.

(The assessment in each case is for one hearth except where otherwise specified).

PONTEFRACT:

Robert Moore 6
Robert Stradley 7
Stephen Standeren 4
Thomas Medley
William Scoley 6
Widdow Simpton 3
Robert Revill 2
John Webster 2
Edward ffeild 2
Ellen Rodcappe 4
William Starkey 3
William Brooke 2
Thomas Burton
Robert Howson
William Brooke
Widdow Greene
Henry Turner
George Caror
Edward Bower
Richard Power
John Nelson 2

Obadiah Moore
Mr. Stropp 3
Edw. Booth 5
Abra. Bray 3
ffrancis Howden 4
John Coulbecke
Byran Lamb 4
Edw. Byrom 2
William Noder 3
Widdow Smith
Geo. Shillitoe 5
John Lafridge 2
John Lee 2
Mary Todd
Hen. Clythera
John Berry 2
William Oates 7
John Walton 3
Leonard Stables 4
Richard Hatton 2
Nath. Jonson, esq., 12

Geo. Garlitoe
Richard Austwicke 11
Mich. Heptonstall 2
Tho. Hawkesworth 2
Gwillian Tayler 2
Anto. Rowden 4
Thomas Greene 2
John Scolefeild 3
James ffrancke, esq. 9
Widdow Harrison 2
Christopher Sykes
Joseph Medley
Nathan Moulden
William Johnson 4
Robert Courteouse
Gervisse Smith 2
William Burnell 2
Hen. Shakleton 3
Christopher Longe 7

Total 181

PONTEFRACT NEWMARKET.

William Hanley 5
Robert Tatham 7
Gervisse Simpson 4
Robert Meritt 5
Geo. Danyell 5
John Wither 8
Timothy ffeild 5
Tho. English 3
Alice Cowper 4
Samuel Tayler 5
John Conell 3
William Knarton

John Knapton
Rich. Smith 6
John Darley 3
Tho. Heptenstall
John Pell
William ffoster 4
William Bankes 4
Mrs. Jennings
Tho. Hyde 6
Alice Cliffe 3
Rich. England
Robert Robley 2

John Empson 2
Robert Hallifax 6
Anto. Sowden 3
Andrew Wildman 4
Tho. Hall 4
Tho. ffeild 2
Rich. Wildman, gent 5
William Houldgate
Lee Hartley 3
ffrancis Kellam 5
Widdow Simpkinson
Christofer Hayforth 2

PONTEFRACT NEWMARKET.—Continued.

John Johnson 6
Steaven Pearson 4
William ffeild 3
Mrs. Warde 6
Peter Swift 7
William Stable 2
Edward ffeild 2
Richard Lyley 5
John Boyne 3
John Boult 3
Geo Harrison 3
John Cooper 6
Tho. Nell 4
William Adam 3
Tho. Shillitoe
Total 190

PONTEFRACT MICKLEGATE.

Tho. Coocke
Mrs. Nott 6
Rich. Turner 2
Mr. Ruby 6
ffrancis Lee 3
William ffarry 3
William Pollard
Rich. Headley 3
Hen. Gattell
Mr. Dixon 4
John Boys 3
Widdow Spaine
Peter Gattell
Widdow Stockell
Peter Staffe
Hen. Galfe 2
Robert Wilson 2
Robert Byrom
Robert Sutton 4
William Brayne 5
Robert Wilson 4
William Alam
Anto Medley
John Loud 4
William Moore
Mr. Wilkinsom 4
Rich. Bradford 2
William Slacke 6
Mr. Warde 3
Widdow Roper 2
Tho. Soyle 2
Rich. Sinith
Geo. Ouden
James Hurst
William Gromaker
Leo Johnson
Ann Reaynard
Gilbert Hough 2
John Craveby
Edward Marshall
Mr. Wilkinson 6
Matthew Bradshawe 4
Widdow Hewit
William Wilson 2
Mr. Hill 6
Abra. Wilson 3
Hen. Milnes 3
Rich. Shakleton
William Matheropp
Widdow Crawforth 3
John Burell
John Rusby 2
Isabell Walter
Total 124

PONTEFRACT ROPERGATE.

Mr. Geo. Warde 5
Mr. John Ramsden 5
Mr. Sam. Jackson 3
Tho. Lapidge 3
Tho. Heptonstall 3
Myles Boulton 3
Mr. Cooper 5
John Child
Ann Tomlinson
James Hurst 2
Robert Smithyes
Hen. Allen 2
Rich. Greene 2
Abra. Wilson 3
Jenitt Parson
John Thorpe
John Bradshawe
Joshua Oxley 3
Edw. Mackeing 3
William Coats 4
Tho. Leugeard
William Ashenden 4
John Hancocke
Hen. Coaleman
Total 59

PONTEFRACT NORTHGATE.

Mr. Pearpointe (New Hall) 36
Mr. Stables 6
William Moxon
Geo. Wrigley 4
Ralph ffoster
John Townend
James Hurst
Luke Walker
Mr. Tankerd 5
John Stables 3
ffran. Mountain
John Petty
Tho. Jackson 4
Geo. Sager
Edward Lapidge
Hen. Beckwith
John ffeilding 3
John Drackes 4
Zacheriah Stables 2
Christofer King
Rich. Cattell
Widdow Todd 2
William Brasebridge 2
Robert Langfeild
William Turner
Richard Ransome
John Dayne
John Cressy 3
John Hodgshon 2
William Wrigley
Mr. Rusby 4
Widdow Greene

PONTEFRACT NORTHGATE.—Continued.

William ffrankish	John ffenton 2	Joshua Walker
Matthew Burwell	Joseph Wilson 2	John Hobkinson
John Bywater	Robert Heppedge	Alex. Styleman
Peter Watson	William Browne 2	Sam. William
Tho. Linley	Steaven Duffield	William Bircham 2
Robert Howdale 2	ffran. Ellerby	Total 121

Perfect's Hospital.

In 1667 a hospital for aged and infirm poor was erected at the expense of the town and corporation. It is commonly known as "Perfect's Hospital," from an endowment made to it by William Perfect, Esq., a Pontefract Alderman. This endowment consisted of five tenements, and three adjoining garths, left in trust for poor persons "living in the said Hospital," such poor persons to be "four aged and infirm married couples belonging to the town of Pontefract." The presentation of the said poor was vested in Alderman Perfect during his lifetime, and after his decease in the Mayor and Aldermen of Pontefract for the time being as perpetual trustees.

From an entry in the Pontefract Corporation Records we find that the Duke of York (afterwards James II.), passing through Pontefract in 1665 on his way to spend a few months at York, during the terrible prevalence of the great plague in London, was entertained at a Banquet at the town's charges. There is a tradition that during his stay in Pontefract, he lodged in the ancient house at the east end of the Market Place, but we have been unable to verify this from contemporary records.

Nevison.

During the reign of Charles II., flourished William Nevison, the notorious highwayman, whose real name was John Brace or Bracey. He appears to have much frequented Pontefract, at which town he is commonly said to have been born in 1639 of "well-reputed honest parents."

His adopted name is still locally preserved in "Nevison's Leap," a deep cutting through the rock on the road leading out of Pontefract towards Ferrybridge, over which tradition

credits the robber to have leaped his horse as he was being hotly pursued for a robbery committed in the neighbourhood.

He is said to have been at one time a soldier, and to have served under the Duke of York at the siege of Dunkirk, where he displayed considerable bravery. On his return to England, he commenced the career of a highwayman, in which he speedily achieved notoriety by his boldness and daring, and so dexterous was he in eluding pursuit that he received the appellation of "Swift Nick," from no less a personage than Charles II.

About the year 1661 Nevison, after relieving a rich grazier of £450, is said to have suddenly resolved to reform, and walked to his father's house at Pontefract, where he was welcomed as a returned prodigal. He married a Pontefract woman, and remained unsuspected at Pontefract, until his father's death, when he again took to "the road" and began to levy blackmail upon the carriers and drovers of the northern highways, protecting them in return, after the manner of Scott's "Rob Roy."*

Nevison's chief repute lay in his wonderful horsemanship. He it was who is said to have performed that marvellous ride from London to York (accredited by Harrison Ainsworth in "Rookwood" to Dick Turpin, the highwayman of a later time), a distance of 200 miles, on a May-day in 1673. Having committed a robbery near London, he appeared at a public resort in York 15 hours later, and made use of this fact to prove an *alibi*.

One of his favourite hiding-places was a farmhouse, still standing, near North Elmsall, and he was a well-known habitué of an inn at Howley, where the landlord, Fletcher by name, tempted by a large reward offered for his capture, endeavoured, with the aid of his brother, to secure Nevison in an upper room, but the robber escaped by the window and set off towards Morley, pursued by one of the Fletchers, who grappled with him, and in the struggle was killed by the

* Macaulay.

desperado. There formerly stood, in a field near Howley Hall, a small stone bearing this inscription :—

"Here Nevison killed Fletcher, 1684."

This stone has now been removed into the grounds of Howley Hall.

Soon after this he was captured at Sandal, convicted, and sentenced to be hanged at York, but he managed to break out of prison, and again took to the road, only to be shortly afterwards re-captured at Milford, sent to York Castle, and hanged on the gallows outside Micklegate Bar, 4th May 1685.

Whether all the deeds assigned to Nevison the highwayman relate to the same person is doubtful. Some of them are ascribed to a William Nevison ; some to a John Nevison ; and there are several persons of that surname, with different Christian names, mentioned in the York Castle Records on various dates in the 17th century, proving that the name was a common one in Yorkshire at that time. Perhaps, therefore, we have more than one notorious Nevison. However that may be, the name and deeds of Nevison were long sung in local ballads, one of which concludes :—

"He maintained himself like a gentleman,
Besides he was good to the poor,
He rode about like a bold hero,
And he gain'd himself favour therefore."

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Show by what danger and difficult ways,
Our ancestors at their utter mights
Have brought this realm with honour to our days,
Aye fighting for their liberties and rights."
—*John Bellenden.*

Pontefract Charter of 1676.

Charles II. granted to the borough a new charter (dated 20 February, 1676) by which he confirmed all the rights, privileges and immunities of the corporate body granted by former charters, except the election of Town Clerk and Recorder, which he reserved for his own choice and that of his successors, investing the mayor with the power of only nominating them, so that these two officials possessed no authority to act without the royal mandate. This charter, in addition to confirming to the borough its ancient privileges, granted two new fairs as follows :—

"and whereas by a certain Inquisition taken by virtue of our mandate at Castleforth in our Countie of Yorke, on the 2nd day of September now last past, and certified into our chancery, and there remaining on record by the oath of honest and lawful men of the countie aforesaid, it is assuredly found that it will not be to the damage or prejudice of us or others, or to the detriment of any neighbouring market or fair, if we should grant to the mayor and burgesses of the borough of Pontefract aforesaid and their successors, that they and their successors might have and enjoy yerely for ever, two new markets and fairs within the town or borough of Pontefract aforesaid; one of which to be holden in and upon Saturday next following the Thursday next before the purification of the blessed Virgin Mary; and the other

Pontefract New Market Hall, showing Moot Hall.

upon the Saturday next following the Wednesday next after the feast of St. Hilary, and for those so many days to continue, for the buying and selling of all manner of beasts, cattle, wares and merchandizes."

Trade Guilds. By one of the bye-laws of the Corporation in force at this period, no man was allowed to commence business within the borough unless he had served an "apprenticeship to the said business within the limits of the borough;" in consequence whereof the inhabitants secured to themselves the trade of the town, by forming companies or guilds, into which none could be admitted but on the condition specified, or by payment of a fixed sum of money. These Trade Guilds were subsequently abolished by a bye-law passed in the Moothall 1 February, 1736; the clause runs thus:—

"That restrictions laid on trade, by preventing the spirit of competition, tends to the injury of trade, and is found to be destructive of the prosperity of the town, and in consequence all orders, constitutions and bye-laws heretofore made are now repealed, revoked and made void; and that all persons whatever, may have full liberty to exercise their respective trades within the borough."

Act of Uniformity. The living of St. Giles during the Commonwealth days was in the hands of a Rev. Joseph Ferrett (sometimes written Ferrit), evidently a man of Presbyterian ordination. He held the post from 1650 to 1661, during Archbishop Williams' absence from his see. After the Restoration, Mr. Ferrett resigned his vicarage (April 1661), and removed to Tanshelf, where he continued as a Presbyterian preacher until his death, in 1663. He was succeeded at St. Giles by the Rev. Samuel Drake, D.D., son of the diarist of the Siege of Pontefract Castle.

The Parliment of 1662 passed an "Act of Uniformity" designed to force the Puritans to conform to certain defined ceremonies. This rigorous measure prescribed a uniform religious service in all the churches of the land, and ordained that every minister holding an ecclesiastical benefice, should declare his unfeigned assent to everything contained in, and prescribed by, the Book of Common Prayer, or be deprived of his benefice.

The passing of this Act resulted in the withdrawal of

2,000 clergy of the Established Church, and among them, says Boothroyd, was the Rev. Joseph Farrett, the Vicar of Pontefract; but this is an error, as Mr. Farrett resigned 16 months previous to the passing of the Act. After his resignation, his Puritan friend, Mr. Leonard Warde, who resided in the old mansion called "The Court" at Tanshelf, hospitably received him. United with a number of people of like mind, they regularly met for worship at the house of Mr. Warde, and thus formed the neucleus of the first Congregational Church at Pontefract.

On the death of Mr. Farrett,* the Rev. John Noble (who had been ejected from Smeaton vicarage) became their pastor, and held the appointment for a period of sixteen years.

In 1672 Charles II. issued his first "Declaration of Indulgence." The number of applicants for licences to preach, or for preaching-places to be recorded as provided by the Act, shows that the severe laws of 1662 had by no means been effectual in securing conformity. In 1672 we find "Leonard Warde, Presbyterian," registering a preaching-place in his house at Tanshelf, James Noble being the preacher.

The Rev. James Noble was succeeded in 1679 by the Rev. Peter Naylor. From the records now preserved in the Public Record Office, London, we find that "Peter Naylor, preacher, Presbyterian," was among those who applied for and obtained "permission to preach in the house of Boniface Cooper at Pomfret." Probably the Tanshelf congregation moved to a more capacious building in Newgate about 1689. The date of the removal is fixed by the following notice to the West Riding Quarter Sessions:—"July ye 31st, 1689, We desire that the barn in Newgate, belonging to John Watson, may be allowed as a place for religious worship, as by Act of Parliament allowed, Timothy Lyle, John Mell, John Pickeringe." This barn, thus converted into a chapel, was occupied for about

* Mr. Farrett died in 1663 at the age of 63; his widow survived until 1681; her burial is recorded on August 26, as that of "Mrs. Ann Ferrit, aged widow."

100 years, when the congregation removed to a building situated to the back of Northgate.

The Rev. Thomas Manlove succeeded Mr. Naylor in 1691, and in 1694 the pastorate was in the hands of the Rev. John Heywood, son of the famous Rev. Oliver Heywood, from whose journal we quote.

The list of subsequent pastors we take from the church books :—

1715 to 1746, the Rev. E. Sandford.

1746 to 1791, the Revs. John Coppeck and William Tapp. During the pastorate of the latter gentleman, the old meeting-house was enlarged.

From 1792 until his removal to Huddersfield in 1820, the pastor was the Rev. Benjamin Boothroyd, D.D., author of a "History of Pontefract, published in 1807."

1820 to 1836, Rev. James Rawson.

1836 to 1837, Rev. Henry Douglas.

1837 to 1847, Rev. John Millson, during whose pastorate the church was again enlarged.

1847 to 1852, Rev. John Harrop.

1852 to 1857, Rev. John Ellis.

1857 to 1862, Rev. James Innes.

1862 to 1870, Rev. Thos. Willis, during whose pastorate the present Sunday schools were erected.

1870 the Rev. Joseph Moffat, who was succeeded during the same year by the Rev. A. G. Nicholls, the present pastor, to whose kindness the writer is indebted for some of the above particulars.

Popish Recusants.

After the passing of the Act of Uniformity, the dissatisfied Romanists began that reputed conspiracy against the life of Charles II., their object being, as was plausibly stated, to subvert the Government and re-establish the Roman Catholic religion. It is, however, needless here to enter into such particulars of the scheme as are common history. Many of the informants, among whom was the notorious Titus Oates, perjured them-

selves by all manner of false and garbled statements, yet notwithstanding some of the accused died on the gallows.

As regards the plot locally, one of these informants was a Robert Bolron of Shippon Hall, in the parish of Barwick-in-Elmet, who reported Sir Thomas Gascoigne of Barnbow Hall, Sir Walter Vavasour of Hazlewood and his daughter the Lady Tempest, Mr. Richard Iles of Ferry Fryston, and Robert Stansfeld of New Hall, Pontefract, the latter of whom was charged with the design of setting fire to Pontefract. This Robert Stansfeld was one of the Aldermen of Pontefract during the reign of James II., but after the Revolution he was turned out of office. In 1682 his name appears in the Church Registers as having been excommunicated in St. Giles Church as a Papist, along with Robert Ward, William Lapidge and John Wildman, Presbyterians. The words, "Lord have mercy on their souls," was added after the entry by the then Vicar.

Sir Thomas Gascoigne, then in his 84th year, was arrested and lodged in the Tower, but acquitted after a protracted trial 24 January, 1679.

Robert Stansfeld, Richard Iles and the rest were tried at York and released upon security. We again meet with the name of Richard Iles in the following list of Popish Recusants from Ferry Fryston, summoned to appear at the General Sessions, held at Pontefract in April, 1679 :—

> "James Calvert, Richard Iles and his wife Elizabeth, Hellen Jackson, Mary Iles, Joseph Haire, Margaret Norton, Elizabeth Shillitoe; Mary, wife of Robert Speight, Thomas Stooks, Dorothy Wright, Gabriel Toothill and Alice his wife."

The following affidavit from Featherstone was presented to the July Sessions at Pontefract :—

> "July ye 22nd, 1679. As for Mr. Thomas Hippon and Alis Hippon, they become bound before Mr. Whyte to appear at this Session, as popish recusants. As for Mr. John Hippon, Margaret Thimbleby, and Alis the wife of John Spinke, they are *non est Inuentus*. As for John Spinke and Mrs. Brigitt Scholey I have given them notice to be heare according to Order, signed William Malinson, Constable. His X Mark."
>
> "Clayton in ffrickley, July ye 22nd, 1679 :—
> These are to certifie the Right Worshipfull His Matics. Justices of ye

Peace, that acoording to a Warrt. sent from ye Clerke of ye Peace concerninge Popish recusants, I have to the utmost of my power endeavoured to have taken the bodys of the said Recusants with the Churchwardens assistance and other, but they have either hid themselves or fled away. Christopher Hurst, Constable."

The following local names appear in the long list of suspected Popish Recusants reported to the Pontefract January Session of 1680 :—

"Samuel Jackson and Ann his wife of Tanshell; Isabell wife of Mychell Gage of Knottingley; Thomas Ippon, John Ippon, Aleis Ippon, Margaret Thimbelee, John Spinke and Aleis his wife, all of ffetherstone; Edward Howcroft, Richard Tempistt, Edward Marchill, servants of Mr. Cauelvaert; Mary Illes, Richard Illes and Mary his wife, Thomas Stocks, Dorty Bramllay, Elling Jackson and Jane her dowther; Anne Bedford, Elizabeth Shilato and Elizabeth her dowther, Marye Hight, Walte Tutill, Margret Norton, Joseph Haier and ffrances his wife, all of ffery ffryston; Thomas Prince and Anne his wife, Margt Bilcliffe, Mary Bilcliffe ye elder, Matthew Bilcliffe, Anne Bilcliffe and Thomas ffeminge, all of Houghton; Anne Norton and Sarah Atak of Castlefurth."

Thomas Fleming of Houghton, two years later, presented to the Justices the following certificate :—

"William Bridges, Rector of Castlefurth, certifies that Thomas ffeming of Houghton, for several years a popish Recusant, did, 3 or 4 months agone declare his sorrow for persisting so long in that his recusancy, whereupon he procured his absolution from the ecclesiastical court, and since that time hath duly resorted to his parish church of Castlefurth as a member of the Church of England. Dated 15th January, 1682. William Bridges, Rector."

The "Toleration Act" of 1689 put an end to these religious persecutions, though still permission to use places for public worship had to be obtained by application to the Justices at the Sessions. Thus we find such local records as the following :—

"Westridd. Qr. Sessions holden at Pontefract July 31st 1689, We desire that the barn in Newgate and Tanshelf, belonging to John Watson, may be allowed as a place of religious worship as by Act of Parliament allowed. Timothy Lyle, John Mell, John Piekeringe."

"Pontefract, April, 1694. We shall (God willing) assemble to meet to celebrate God's Worship at the house of Abraham Heinworth, and the recorded for religious worship."

"Pontefract Session, July, 1695. The house of John Heawards, Tanshelf, recorded for religious worship. Signed, John Huntington."

"Pontefract Session, April, 1696. Application that the house at

Pontefract, wherein I now dwell, may be recorded as a place for Religious Worship. John Heywood."

Pontefract Sessions, April, 1698. "That the Meeting House by and in ye Burying-place of ye people called Quakers, joyning on a Lane called Southgate in Pontefract, be set apart for ye Publique Worship of God after their manner.

Signed :—Robert Clarkson,
Ferdinand Buck,
Joshua Marsden,
} Justices."

The Friends' Meeting-House.

The earliest local records of the estimable fraternity referred to in the above paragraph, date from the year 1652, when at the West Riding Sessions the following indictment appears:—"William Sykes, Quaker, of Knottingley, near Pontefract, testifies against tithes. Fined £266 13s. 4d." He was committed to York Castle for non-payment of the fine, and died there. For some years a small company of these devout people continued to assemble for worship at each other's houses, until the erection of a meeting-house towards the close of the 17th century.

In 1664 one of their number, a Thomas English, grocer, of Pontefract, bought from Nicholas Spencer of Selby, for £20, "a croft in a street called Southgate at Pontefract," and for £15 "a garth called Bolton Croft adjoining the same, and bounded on the east by a little lane."

By a deed dated 2 February, 1664, Thomas English

"gave and granted to John Seeton, of Blyth, yeoman; Henry Jackson of Tottess in Wooddale; Richard Morton of Woodland Hill, yeoman; Robert Clarkson of Pontefract, grocer; Henry Calfe of Pontefract, malster, to them and their heirs for ever the above mentioned crofts, Spencer Croft to have and to hold for me and my wife for our natural lives for a possession of a burial-place, and from and after the decease of the last survivor, to the aforesaid trustees and their heirs for ever, to bury their dead in, and also such other persons as they or any two or more of them shall give their consent to be buried there; but in case any default be found hereafter, then to the said trustees and their heirs without limit whatsoever. Also they shall have power to enlarge the burial-ground of Spencer Croft by removing the wall, and taking in additional land from Bolton Croft. Also that the rents received from Bolton Croft shall be devoted to the relief of such poor persons as stand in need thereof, without any limit whatsoever, and if any dispute arises at any time, then the matter shall be settled by the

major part of the said trustees, and not by suit-at-law or chancery; and if when two or more of the trustees are dead, then the remainder shall choose other honest and conscientious men, fearing God and hating covetousness, and convey the same to them, and so on for ever."

Religious Persecutions.

In the Pontefract Book of Entries, under date 6 Jan. 1666, we have a record of a conviction of John Taylor, Edmund Hulley, James Knolles, John Bolderston, Robert Cooke, Michael Shillitoe, Peter Scayfe and Henry Parker, Quakers, before Robert Latham, Mayor, John Francks and John Rusby, Justices. Their offence is described as "for assembling and illicitly meeting at the house of Henry Calfe, in Pontefract, under pretence of exercising their religion in a mode other than that prescribed by the liturgy or use of the Church of England." They were sentenced to be kept in the House of Correction for one month, or to pay a fine of £5 each.

Among a list of persons charged under the Conventicle Act, at the Pontefract Sessions, October 1682, we find:—

"Thomas Cooper, a Quaker, of Knottingley (who was speaking or praying), Sarah his wife, Thomas Calfe and Samuell Weidye of Pontefract, and Peter Barrett of Carleton, indicted that on December 4 last past, held a conventicle at the house of Elizabeth Stones at Tanshelf. Thomas Cooper, when charged by the clerk, refused to plead to the indictment, and was fyned tenn pounds, which he refused to paye. Ordered that he be conveyed to prison."

The same record states that Peter Barrett and Mark Trickett, an ejected minister, both confessed to having preached and prayed at a conventicle held at Tanshelf, and were committed to prison forthwith.

At the same Sessions, we find:—"Robert Clarkson, of Pontefract, a Quaker, contemptuously refused to take the oath of allegiance, and is therefore committed to the gaoler of Yorke for imprisonment."

Some of these extracts from the West Riding Session Rolls serve to remind us of the limited ideas of religious liberty generally prevalent in the Olden Time. In the history of religious persecution in England, neither Roman Catholic

nor Protestant can claim immunity from intolerance and outrage.

Resuming our account of the Pontefract "Friends," we find that on a portion of the site of Spencer Croft their present meeting-house was erected in 1697, and also a stable adjoining for the accommodation of such as came on horseback from a distance to attend the services.

From a document dated 7 of the ninth month, 1767, the Society "order that the upright gravestones be removed from the burial ground and placed in the stable." On investigation we find that practically the floor of the stable was paved by these gravestones.

Another record of 1832 orders "the south wall of Spencer Croft to be removed further into Bolton Croft," thus enlarging the burial-ground as provided for in the original deed of 1664.

On a recent visit to this quaint old meeting-house and its secluded burial-ground, our attention was directed to the tombstone over the grave of a sister of the late Right Hon. John Bright, the eminent statesman. It bears the following simple inscription :—

"Margaret, widow of William Leatham, of Heath, died 7th of 1st Mo., 1871. Aged 78."

Old Soldiers

During the reign of Charles II. frequent petitions were presented before the various Sessions, from lame and disabled soldiers, for grants of pensions, their claim being generally that, having been disabled from wounds received while serving under Charles I. against the Long Parliament, they had since fallen into destitution. The pension granted was usually 40s. per annum, raised by special estreat upon the respective wapentakes.

These petitions set forth interesting particulars of service, and of the actions and sieges in which the petitioners had been severally engaged.

We select a few local cases which may be of interest :—

1675. Applicants for the Lame Soldiers' Fund to His

Majesty's Justices of Peace at the General Sessions holden at Pontefract:—

John Haigue, of Barwick-in-Elmet, souldier under Sir Philip Monckton, at Willoughby Fight, and at Pontefract Castle under Col. Morris.

George Buck, of ffenton, humble petition to the honoble and right Wpfull His Majesties Justices of Peace at the General Session holden at Pontefract. Humbly sheweth that your poor peticonr is growen very infirme and lame, and hath lost his eyesight disabled in His Maties. Service in the late unhappy warres, served in the regiment of Sr John Ramsden, being allways faithful and never disserted his service, though he received several maimes and wounds in the same, being growen very poore, and in much want as will appeare by severall substantiall men's hands hereunto written. May it please yor honors to admit him as a Penconer in the first vacancy." Certified by George Stanhope and others.

"Petition of Martin Haigue, of Barwick-in-Elmet, souldier under the Rt. Wpfull Sr Richard Hutton, and was with him at Atherton, Bradford, Burlington, Rotherham and Tadcaster in his own company."

Pontefract Sessions, April, 1680:—

"John Kay, served as trooper in Lord Savil's troop, under Capt. Thomas Shildon, joyned His Maj. Standard at Nottingham, 1642, afterwards in Prince Rupert's Regiment at the battle of Edgehill, where he was wounded and imprisoned."

Pontefract Sessions, July, 1680:—

"We desire yt proclamation may forthwith be made yt noe new pension can admitted, nor gratuities granted, by reason wee find yt ye Act of Parliament is expired soe yt they need not attend. And yt likewise the Chiefe Constables for the whole West Ryd.,doe forthwith attend to this matter."

Pontefract Charter of 1685.

James II. began his short and inglorious reign in 1685. The same year he confirmed the Charter of Pontefract, but added several new clauses as to the constitution of the corporate body. For the better discharge of the will of the King and Parliament, he:—

"assigned, nominated, constituted and appointed John Rusby, gentleman, to be the present Mayor of the town or borough of Pontefract; Robert Tatham, Richard Austwicke, Francis Kellam, John Johnson, Samuel Taylor, Richard Oates, William Coates, and John Knowles to be the present aldermen, and Francis White, Esq., to be the Recorder; John Dixon to be the common clerk."

And it was enacted that these several officials should take the

oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and that John Rusby, the Mayor, should have the power and authority to require and administer the said oaths, declarations, and subscriptions thereof.

By this new Charter the king vested in himself the right of removing at his will and pleasure the mayor and aldermen. This was ordained that all bodies corporate should be dependent on the crown, and thus be compelled to support the royal pretensions, or be deprived of their offices.

The estate of the corporate body at this date consisted of 14 acres of land, lying within the borough, a house in Shoemarket, and a corn windmill in the township of Tanshelf, as well as a number of rents and tolls derived from other tenements and lands within the borough.

Extracts from W. R. Session Rolls.

Pontefract Session, April, 1676.

"That Anothony Morley, of Knottingley, be transported to Barbadoes, being an incorigable Rougue, unless he find sureties in tenn days."

Pontefract Sessions, April, 1677.

"Joseph Ashburne, indicted for cutting and hewing down quick woods and a stile in Doctor's close. Bound over to keep the peace for seven yeares.

Pontefract Sessions, April, 1686.

"Treason and Oaths. Your petticon'r, Robert Rainer, was ordered by Sir John Kay and Mr. Horton to maintayne James Trenchard committ to yor petticon'r for beeing suspected to have been in the late plott, yor petticon'r hath kept him a quarter of a yeare which cost him 20s. Ordered that the same be paide."

The above was evidently the reputed Popish Plot already referred to.

Pontefract Sessions, July, 1691.

"Information laid before the Justices:—Allan Cockin in Barnby-upon-Dunn, beinge clarke to Roger Portington, Esq., J.P., came to Pontefract Session with some recognizances, and about other business, and lodged at the house of John Bracebridge, in Pontefract, and beinge gone to bed, was set upon and robbed of about tenn shillings, besides other things."

Land Tax, 1692-3.

The following extract from the Exchequer Rolls of 1692-3 may be of local interest as

indicating the comparative value of the neighbouring townships.

Pontefract ...	...	£278	10	0
Tanshelfe ...	...	73	15	6
Knottingley	...	81	11	4
ffery Fryston	...	122	10	6
Brotherton	...	43	14	5
Castleford ...	...	38	2	2
Houghton ...	...	56	0	4
ffeatherston	...	41	7	0
Darrington ...	...	37	0	10

Disputed Election.

Pontefract was full of excitement and confusion during the year 1698 owing to the result of the Parliamentary Election. Robert Monkton, grandson of the Rt. Hon. William George 5th Viscount Galway, was the defeated candidate, the successful candidates being Sir John Bland of Kippax Park, and John Bright, Esq., of Badsworth, whereupon Robert Monkton presented a petition to the House of Commons, setting forth that he "was duly chosen member and ought to have been returned as such. By corrupt and illegal methods John Bright procured himself to be returned in wrong to the petitioner, who prays for relief therein."

The said petition was referred to the Committee of Privileges and Elections, which reported that the right of election was agreed to be such persons as had an Inheritance or Freehold of Burgage Tenure within the said borough of Pontefract, and that there was upon the poll for Mr. Bright 72, for Monkton 70, and after hearing voluminous evidence pro. and con., and the House being subsequently moved, it divided thereon, with the result that for the election of Mr. Bright were 143 against 157, and the election was therefore negatived, and a new writ was made out accordingly.

A second election took place and, John Bright being again returned, Robert Monkton presented another petition, when

the Dissolution of Parliament and a General Election put an end to further proceedings.

Sir Patience Warde.

Perhaps the most eminent of the Pontefract worthies during this 17th century, was Sir Patience Warde. He was the 7th son of Thomas Warde, and was born at Tanshelf in 1628 ; an entry in the church registers at Pontefract records that he was there baptised the 7th day of December of that year.

In some memoirs which he left, he gives this account of the origin of the singular baptismal name which he bore:— "His mother having borne six sons in succession, the father began to think the family increased too fast for his estate, and he made a vow that if another son arrived he would call him Patience, and he kept his word."

He was intended for the ministry, and with that view he was sent to the University in 1643, but he afterwards turned his attention to trade, and became a very eminent merchant of London, was a Commissioner of the Customs, and Alderman and Lord Mayor of London in 1681. He received the honour of Knighthood in 1675, and was M.P. for Pontefract from 1681 to 1688.

His attachment to the Protestant religion and to Whig principles exposed him to danger during the reign of James II., so he retired to Holland, then the rendezvous of the suspected and disaffected. He returned on the accession of William III., and, dying on July 11th 1696, was buried at St. Clements, Eastcheap.

His nephew Sir John Warde, became Lord Mayor of London in 1719, and was the ancestor of the Wardes of Hooton Pagnell. He was the younger son of Capt. Warde, J.P., the eldest brother of Sir Patience, and was only two years old when he lost his father in 1657. He was brought up by his uncle, Leonard Warde (Mayor of Pontefract in 1651), and became a merchant tailor, Alderman of Candlewick Ward, Director of the Bank of England, and M.P. for Dunwick, co. Suffolk.

CHAPTER XXV.

—o—

"The trifling scenes we have of Olden Times in view
Perplexes us; things old give way to what are new,
Then what was new by the same rule becometh old." *Anon.*

We purpose in this chapter to refer briefly to a few 18th century Records of Pontefract which may be of interest to our readers.

An Ancient Custom.

In the Corporation Records under date 1700, appears an Order re Public Shaving and Hairdressing on Sundays, which reminds us that this was specially an age of periwigs, as we may also see from contemporary prints. Wigs are said to have been worn in England as far back as the reign of King Stephen, but their palmy days belong to the 17th and the earlier part of the 18th centuries. Charles II. was the earliest English King represented on the Great Seal wearing a large periwig. Dr. Doran assures us that the king did not bring the fashion to England; indeed he appears to have disapproved of it at first for "he forbade the members of the Universities to wear periwigs, smoke tobacco, or to read their sermone." The members did all three, and Charles soon found himself doing the first two.

Pepys's "Diary" contains much interesting information concerning the new fashion of periwigs just introduced at

Court, and as might be expected, Pepys, who delighted to be in the fashion, no sooner saw the king wearing the huge wig than he set off to consult his own barber and assume the fashionable headgear.

The following is a summary of the Order referred to above as recorded in the Pontefract Book of Entries:—

> "Whereas divers complaints have beene made that the Barbers of the said Burrough doe frequently and openly use and exercise theire respective trades upon the Lord's Day in profanacon thereof, and to the high displeasure of Allmighty God: for remydye whereof and to prevent sueh evill practises for the future, it is therefore ordered that noe Barber shall use or exercise the trade of a barber uppon the Lord's day commonly called Sunday, nor shall trim or shave any person upon that day either publiquely or privately . . . . . under a penalty of five shillings for every such offence, one Moiety of which Forfeitures shall go to the Informer, and the other to be paid into the hands of ye Mayor of Pontefract, to be by him Imployed towards the repayre of the Common Hall . . . . . and this order to be and remaine a Standing Order for ever."

We think we perceive in this Order an indication of public shaving performed in the Churchyard and in the Market Place, an ancient custom of bygone England, dating back to mediæval times.

The old fashion of periwigs has passed away, as well as the old-fashioned barber. In years gone by he was a notable character, for he not only shaved, cut hair and made wigs, but he also bled his customers, dressed wounds, and performed other offices now relegated to the surgeon; indeed, the stripes on the barber's pole were intended to represent the bandages ready within to bandage up wounded arms and legs; and as to "letting blood," we do not seem to have so much blood to spare as our forefathers, for the barber always bled his customers once or twice a year, especially in the springtime, the operation being considered very beneficial.

It is rather curious to note that, whilst in most instances the old signs which indicated the callings of shopkeepers have been swept away, the barker's pole still remains with us, a relic of the Olden Times.

Sir John Bland.

Sir John Bland, of Kippax Park, who (with one short interval) was one of Pontefract's representatives from 1690 to 1714, was in 1703 elected Mayor of Pontefract. At the close of his term of office, he proposed to make a gift of money to be expended on some public object for the common good of the inhabitants.

A Town's Meeting was accordingly called to discuss the matter, when it was resolved that "What money the said Sir John Bland will be pleased to give be laid out upon rebuilding the steeple of St. Giles' Church, the steeple being now very ruinous and in great decay."

This church had been restored during the early part of the 17th century, but little, if anything, was done to the old 14th century tower, and hence the burgesses seemed to have considered that Sir John Bland's liberality could not be better exercised than in rebuilding it. The result was the erection of a square tower of weak design, much too high in proportion to its breadth, and giving no promise of stability. It was found necessary about a century later (1803) to replace it by the present tower, in the erection of which the faults of construction that characterised its predecessor are avoided.

This church of St. Giles had, late in the 17th century, become the Parish Church, owing to the older foundation of All Saints having been left in such a ruinous condition at the close of the great Civil War. When Sir John Bland's tower was built at St. Giles, it was proposed to remove into it the only remaining bell at All Saints, but the vicar wisely called a meeting of the parishioners to decide the matter, when the attachment of the people to the memory of the fine old church of All Saints was pleasingly exhibited, for a large majority decided that the bell should not be removed.

The Pillory and Stocks.

We find in the Pontefract Records several references to the Parish Pillory and Stocks, e.g. at the Pontefract Sessions April, 1692, a Michael Wallis was indicted for forging a begging letter, and sentenced "to stand in the pillory, next

Saturday, from 11 to 1 o'clock." At a General Town's Meeting held in the Moot Hall, 1 April, 1707, it was resolved that "the Constables doe Imediately repayre the Pillory, and make it sufficient before Easterday next."

This relic of bygone Pontefract has long since disappeared. We have had some difficulty in locating its exact site, which was probably in the Wool Market, anciently known as Hemp Cross, and later as Hide Cross, where stood in remote times the Town Gallows, and here the early Mayors exercised the power of life and death given by the first Charter of 1484.*

The Stocks—the old-fashioned panacea for reforming swearers, drunkards and Sabbath-breakers—which stood close to the porch of St. Giles' Church, survived until about the year 1872, when they were removed, the use of them having been abandoned some years before. There are yet many old residents of Pontefract who well remember to have seen culprits fastened in the stocks, exposed to the ridicule of the general public, and to those rude vindicators of the law who delighted in throwing rotten eggs and other missiles at the unhappy victim. These were no doubt rough methods of administering justice, but were nevertheless often very effectual in checking certain forms of vice.

Another landmark of by-gone Pontefract standing by the Market Cross is the Town's Pump, erected in 1571,* and which has continued for more than three centuries to render service to the townspeople.

The water was conveyed to the Market Place from a spring called Organn Well, situated near the Wakefield Road. In the Pontefract "Book of Entries" appears an order of a General Meeting in the Moothall, dated Octobert 1653, when it was ordered :—

> "that a conduite in the Market-place, with the lead pipes conveying the water from Organn Well to the said conduite shalbee clensed and repayred at the chardge and contribucon of the several inhabitants of the towne, and espetially by those who fetch water from the same conduite. And according to the anncient custome of the said Towne. whoe shal not beare theire p't of the chardge p'porcionable . . . . . shalbee debarred from the benefitt of the said conduite, except they be

* See Holmes's "Booke of Entries.

Pontefract Market Place in 1777

Showing St. Giles's Church prior to Restoration, Market Cross with Pump (still in use), and Moot Hall in distance.

poore people. And likewise that none shall receive any water from the said conduite for to brewe or steep barley w^thall at such time or times as others have need the same for meat water and water to washe w'hall, but onely at such times as there is water to spare over and besides what is convenient for meat and washing."

There are frequent entries at subsequent dates regarding repairs, etc., up to the year 1810, when the Street Commissioners became responsible for the maintenance of the pump and the line of pipes between it and Organn Well, and this arrangement continued until that authority was displaced by the more modern Sanitary Authority. The pump still remains in use, and long may it be retained for the sake of old times —as a link with the past history of the ancient borough.

The Charity School.

William, second Earl of Strafford, who died in 1695, among other pious bequests gave to the town of Pontefract the sum of £200 towards the repair of All Saints' Church. Fourteen years elapsed, and there being still no prospect of undertaking the restoration of the fabric, the residuary legatee of the earl offered to pay the £200 to the Corporation, on receiving an undertaking to maintain a School with the interest, until the money was required for the repair of the Old Church.

A Town's meeting held in the Moot Hall, 25 August, 1709, consented "that the Mayor doe make a security by way of lease for 900 yeares of the Town's Closes, for securing the repaymt of £200 now paid by his Honor Wentworth for the repaire of the Great Church in Pontefract, and in the meantime directing the use of it to be laid out upon charity, untill the same be laid out, and that he doe put the comon seale to the same."

Soon after, a school was erected in Micklegate, in which the interest of the bequest provided for the education and clothing of 12 girls and 24 boys.

The Market Cross.

Reference has already been made on page 31, to St. Oswald's Cross at Pontefract. Of that ancient Cross, not the slightest memorial now remains, except an engraving in Gough's Camden. On its site was erected in 1734, the present Market

Cross. It bears an inscription on the south face, stating that it was: — "Erected by Mrs. Elizabeth Dupier, relict of Solomon Dupier, gentleman, in a cheerful and generous compliance with his benevolent intention, 1734."

This Solomon Dupier died 20 August, 1732, as appears from a tablet in Darrington Church, where he was buried. His widow, the donor of the Cross, survived until 1745.

Methodism Introduced.

On Tuesday, 18 March, 1746, John Wesley paid his first visit to Pontefract, This visit is mentioned in his journal, but no particulars are given respecting it. The "Stations" of the Methodist Preachers were first published in 1765, and Pontefract at this date was included in the Leeds Circuit. It was about this time that the Rev. Edward Buckley, Vicar of Kippax, interesting himself in the extension of religion, and in Methodism as a means of that extension, pursuaded a John Shepherd, of Peckfield, to take a house in Pontefract, in which to conduct preaching services, and also to afford accommodation for the preachers.

A house known as the the "Castle Chain House" was taken by Mr. Shepherd, and here Methodist Services were regularly held for a number of years. A portion of this house was occupied by Mr. Shepherd as a dwelling-house, with accommodation for the "travelling" preachers, and the rest of the building was set apart as a place of worship. The Rev. Edward Buckley himself frequently preached here. An enlargement was made in 1772, and it is probably to this enlarged building that Wesley refers in the following entry in his journal :—

> "Wednesday, July 29th, 1772. I crossed over to Pomfret, properly Pontefract, and about noon opened the new preaching-house there. The congregation was large and still as night; perhaps this is a token for good. Being straightened for time, I was obliged to ride hard for Swinefleet, and I had strength enough, though none to spare."

In 1787 Wakefield was made the head of a circuit, and included Pontefract and the adjacent villages.

In 1789 the first Methodist Chapel was built in Pontefract,

and seven years later Pontefract was constituted the head of an extensive Circuit, stretching from Barnsdale to Wetherby, comprising twenty-four preaching-places, and having two stationed preachers.

In 1798 Wetherby and five other places were taken from Pontefract and formed into a separate circuit, whilst Selby and five other places were added to the Pontefract circuit. A few years only elapsed, however, before Selby and its surrounding villages were constituted a separate circuit, and, fifty years later, Castleford and several other villages constituted a new circuit, leaving the area comprising the Pontefract circuit very much as it remains to-day.

In January 1825 the Horsefair Chapel was opened by the then President of the Conference, the famous Dr. Newton. A second Chapel was built in Newgate in 1876, its erection being largely owing to the exertions and generosity of the late Richard Moxon, Esq., J.P.

Election Riots of 1768.

The Election of Mayor for the year 1768-9 caused no little commotion in the Borough, which culminated in riotous proceedings on the part of a section of the burgesses.

Two gentlemen were nominated to serve as Mayor, viz.: Alderman Crewe by Lord Galway's party, and Alderman Fox by Sir Rowland Winn's party.

We transcribe the following report from the London Chronicle, of 4 October, 1768:—

> "Last Thursday, William Crewe, Esq., was sworn into the office of Mayor of Pontefract. On his coming out of court, some disorderly persons attempted to force from him his gown and wand, and threw him down; at night a mob assembled before his house, and with large stones broke his windows, and beat down all the shutters. They would probably have proceeded to farther mischief, had not a guard of military come up and prevented it. The mob, notwithstanding, afterwards demolished many windows in other parts of the town. Several of the rioters are apprehended, some of whom are bound over to York Assizes, and others committed to York Castle."

Repeatedly in the history of Pontefract Parliamentary Elections, we have evidences that corrupt practices were pre-

valent. During the contest of 1768, Lord Galway and Henry Starchey, Esq., were opposed by Sir Rowland Winn. At the close of the poll, Lord Galway and Sir Rowland Winn were declared the successful candidates, whereupon Mr. Starchey petitioned the the House of Commons, setting forth "that the Returning Officer had been compelled by force to return Sir Rowland, and that 180 burgesses would have voted for him (Henry Starchey) had they not been intimidated by the fury of the populace." The election of Sir Rowland Winn was therefore declared void, and Henry Starchy, Esq., became the colleague of Lord Galway as Representatives of the Borough.

Pontefract Park enclosed.

From time immemorial Pontefract Park had been a wide "stray," over which the burgesses of Pontefract and Tanshelf had the right of depasturing their cattle free of cost, under the supervision of the lord's park-keeper. After the constitution of the Duchy of Lancaster, certain rights in this extensive tract of land were retained by the Duchy, and at a later date the Galway family also became possessed of certain rights and privileges in the park.

A new arrangement was proposed in 1779 by a document drawn up on behalf of the Surveyor General for the Duchy and the Advisers of Lady Galway, entitled "Proposals for Inclosing the open parts of Pontefract Park," whereby the common land was divided into three portions of about 300 acres each, one portion of which the Inhabitants of Pontefract and Tanshelf were allowed to select.

One of the portions consisted of:—

"the lands there called Vicar Close within the Honor of Pontefract, parcel of His late Majesty's Duchy of Lancaster, with the mines, veins of coal, clay-pits, messuages, &c., with the appurtenances thereto belonging, were by the then King's Majesty's Indenture of Lease, under the seal of His Duchy of Lancaster, dated 25 March 1778, granted and demised unto the Earl of Besborough and John Fountayne Esq., trustees appointed by the last Will and Testament of John Lord Viscount Galway, in the Kingdom of Ireland, to hold to them, their heirs, executors and assigns, for 31 years at a rent of £5 for the first three years, and then £80 per annum for remainder of said term, payable at the Feasts of St. Michael the Archangel, and the Annuncia-

tion of the Blessed Virgin Mary; which premises, with the abuttals and boundaries thereof, did appear by a Survey taken thereof by virtue of a commission issued under the seal of the said Duchy, dated 2 September, 1765, directed to Richard Smith, of Ashbourne, Co. Derby, Surveyor; by him returned into the office of the clerk of the Council of the said Duchy, and there remaining on record."

Another portion of the said park and lands, containing 325 acres,

"was set apart and severed by fences, for the use of the inhabitants of the township of Pontefract and Tanshelf, in discharge of their right of commonage and pasturage over the residue of the said lands, which since the passing of the said Act of Parliament, were divided and laid into several farms. The Honorable Jane, Viscountess Dowager Galway, the widow and relict of the said John, Lord Viscount Galway, was entitled under her late husband's will, to the rents and profits of the demised premises for life. By Deed Poll, the said Earl of Besborough and John Fountayne, trustees, surrendered in the hands of the King's Majesty George III., all such parts of the said premises as remained vested in them after the passing of the said Act, with the appurtenances, estate, interest, deeds, &c., that the same remain absolutely vested in His Majesty, and to be at his disposals."

The Act also provided for two new roads, 40 feet wide, one leading from Tanshelf to Featherstone, and the other from Tanshelf towards Houghton, the latter "shall for the present be used as a Private Way, but shall become a Public Road whenever communication is obtained across the intervening Lands lying between the said park and the village of Houghton."

The burgesses of Pontefract and Tanshelf selected the portion enclosed to the south and east by the proposed new roads, and this arrangement was duly ratified by Parliament in what is called "The Park Act of 1780."

On the construction of the new turnpike road from Leeds to Barnsdale in 1822, under the supervision of Mr. Macadam, the "new road leading towards Houghton," duly became a public road in accordance with the Act of 1779.

St. Joseph's R. C. Church.

We find no records of any Roman Catholic Place of Worship at Pontefract from the time of the Reformation until well on into the 18th century. During the early part of the 17th century there had been a Roman Catholic interest at

Stapleton Park, but when the estate passed into the hands of Sir John Savile of Howley, in 1726, the services were discontinued.

With the coming of Lord Stourton about 1775, the "ancient chapel," still forming an integral part of the fabric of the mansion, was fitted up and used as a Place of Worship, under the charge of the Jesuit Fathers, and a mission in connection therewith was also established at Carleton, in a building dedicated to St. Michael. This building, now devoted to the purpose of a barn, stands by the village-green at Carleton.

About the year 1780 a Father Barrow, S.J., Carleton, commenced a branch mission in a cottage at Tanshelf, and the two missions co-existed until 1820, when they were merged into one located at Tanshelf.

The following is a catalogue of the various incumbents:—

1780 Father Barrow, S.J.

1787 Rev. Edward Howard, S.J.

1810 Rev. John Baptist Fountain, S.J.

1816 Rev. Joseph Reeve, S.J.

These resided at Leipzic Cottage, Carleton.

1818 Father Trothier, S.J., who took up his residence at Tanshelf in 1820, at which date the old Tanshelf coaching house was purchased, and the ground floor converted into a presbytery and chapel. The building stands on the site of the Holy Well of ancient times referred to in an earlier chapter of this work.

1825 Rev. Edward Peugh, S.J., died in 1833 and buried in the Churchyard of All Saints', Pontefract.

1833 Rev. Francis Trapps, S.J., who converted the upper rooms of the building into a chapel.

1835 Rev. James Etheridge, S.J.

1836 Rev. John Bird, S.J.

1847 Rev. Henry Brigham, S.J.

1851 Rev. William Lomax, S.J., of the well-known Lomax family of Clayton Hall, Lancashire. He erected the

Schools which for 50 years have been in use for Sunday and Day School purposes. Father Lomax died at Tanshelf in 1856, and was buried in the garden adjoining the church, where his tombstone may still be seen. There is also in the porch a marble tablet to his memory.

1856 Rev. Henry Thompson, S.J., during whose incumbency the chapel was enlarged by the erection of a new west end and gallery.

1858 Rev. Joseph Wollett, S.J.

1859 Rev. John Rigby, S.J.

1866 Rev. Walter Lomax, S.J.

1867 Rev. George Pearson, S.J. Father Pearson, who is not now attached to the Jesuit Fathers, had afterwards charge of the church of St. Thomas of Canterbury, Goole, which he has recently resigned (1905).

1867 Rev. Peter Sherlock, S.J.

1872 Rev. Walter Clifford, S.J., a descendant of the famous Cliffords, lords of Upper Wharfedale. With him was associated the Rev. John Young, S.J., who served a branch mission established at Castleford, up to the year 1881, when Castleford became a separate mission by the appointment of the Very Rev. Dean Hewison. Services were held in a schoolroom built at Castleford in 1877, until the erection of the present church in 1891.

1888 Rev. James Maquire, S.J., the last of the Jesuit Fathers who had charge of the Pontefract Mission.

The following belong to the Order of Secular Priests :—

1890 Rev. Martin Bray.

1893 Rev. Cyril De Cuyper, the present incumbent, who erected the new Infants' School, and to whose kindness and courtesy we are indebted for permission to transcribe from the Church Registers.

Our thanks are due and are here tendered to the Very Rev. Rector, S.J., of Stonehurst College, Blackburn, who

kindly furnished us with information from the archives of that historic foundation relating to this Pontefract Mission.

In the 17th George III., 1777, an Act was passed whereby a tax was levied of 21s. yearly for every male servant employed as house steward, master of the horse, coachman, groom, postilion, &c. The following, taken from the records preserved in the Public Record Office is a list of those taxed in Pontefract for the year 1777. (The numerals refer to the number of male servants employed).

John Auckland 1
Joseph Beaumont 1
Mrs. Bowling 1
Alderman Cockell 1
James Coates 2
Dr. Davison 1
Benjamin Day 1
Dr. Dismay 1
Rev. Mr. Harrison 1
Rev. Mr. Herring 1
Mrs. Ingrim 1
Alderman Lucas 1
Alderman Lamb 1
Ratt Middley 1
Mr. Oxley 1
Alderman Perfect 1
Alderman Popplewell 1
Alderman Wm. Perfect 1
Col : Ramsden 3
Alderman Swiney 1
Alderman Saltonstall 1
Mrs. Sugden 1
James Seaton 1
Alderman Taylor 1
Nicholas Torre 2
Mrs. Wilsford 2
Joseph Wilson 4

A glimpse of 18th century times is brought under our notice by an old handbill issued in 1780 by William Dawson, a Pontefract carrrier. In this circular he acquaints his patrons of speedy communication between Pontefract and York, as follows :—

"William Dawson, carrier, begs his best thanks to the inhabitants of York and Pontefract for the long support he and his late father have experienced from them, and takes this method to acquaint them that he continues to set out from Pontefract as usual every Thursday morning ; arrives at York that evening ; returns from thence on Friday noon to Pontefract, where he exposes fish to sale on Saturday. He proposes also to set out from Pontefract every Monday morning at 11 o'clock ; to arrive at York that night ; to leave York next morning at ten o'clock ; get to Pontefract that night, and sell fish there on Wednesday and Thursday. To this new journey, as well as the old one, he hopes for the encouragement of the public, by being favoured with parcels, &c.

WILLIAM DAWSON."

Pontefract Cakes.

Pontefract has long been noted for what are universally known as "Pomfret Cakes." The Pomfret Cake crest or trademark represents the castle gates with a raven on the top bar, and is said to have been in use nearly 400 years. According to Fox, the liquorice plant, from which they are largely manufactured, was introduced into Pontefract in 1562.

By an Order of the Corporation passed in 1701, the inhabitants of Pontefract were prohibited under certain penalties from selling any Liquorice Buds or Setts to persons residing out of the limits of the Borough. This was evidently with the intention of making the growth of this peculiar plant a monopoly of the town. Though the attempt to enforce such an Order was futile, yet the cultivation of the plant has remained largely local on account of the peculiar character of the soil in and around Pontefract, which specially favours its growth.

In the Universal British Directory of 1790, we find four Pontefract names of liquorice growers and refiners recorded, viz., Benjamin Brown, Thomas Dunhill, George Dunhill, and Francis Osbourn.

In Baines' Directory of 1822 are recorded five Pontefract names of liquorice boilers and dealers, viz. :—

Thomas Barrett, Ropergate.
Jane Brown, ,,
F. G. Osbourn, ,,
George Dunhill, Micklegate.
Thomas Dunhill, ,,

Tradesmen's Tokens.

It was a general custom during the 17th and 18th centuries for tradesmen to coin tokens for the convenience of trade, as there was a scarcity of copper coinage. These being struck for necessary change, the figure and device were various, and the materials used were lead, tin, copper or brass. Every tradesman who issued this then useful kind of specie was obliged to take it again when brought to him, and give the value repre-

sented in silver coin. This custom continued until such times as the Government introduced a sufficient quantity of half-pence and farthings for the exigencies of commerce.

The following Pontefract persons are recorded as issuing tokens between the years 1640 and 1674:—George Daniell, Lee Hartley (grocer), Thomas English (grocer), Timothy Field, Thomas Hathornwhite, Richard Lyle (mercer), Robert More (grocer), Isabella Oates (draper), Joseph Wilson, and Joseph Wither (innkeeper).

Stage-Coaches.

The Great North Road which skirts the eastern boundary of Pontefract, has been an important highway of traffic from time immemorial, but its most flourishing period dates from the middle of the 17th century to the advent of railways in the 19th century.

The earliest mention to be found of stage-coaches dates from about 1658, when one commenced to run from London to York.

The roads at that period were in a deplorable condition, necessitating a great breadth of the wheels of the coaches, which rendered progress both slow and tedious.

Ferrybridge was the great centre for many miles around Pontefract, and thither intending travellers had to wend their way on foot or on horseback. Sir Walter Calverley mentions in 1691, and several other occasions, of having ridden on horseback from Calverley Hall to Ferrybridge, to meet the coach for London.

In the hey-day of the stage-coach, it is said that from 24 to 30 coaches passed through Ferrybridge per day, besides a constant stream of vehicles of every description, including a large proportion of the equipages of the nobility, calling into requisition a host of coachmen, guards, postillions, post-boys, grooms, and porters. Its inns were first-class, and the acommodation a great attraction to travellers, who looked forward with pleasurable anticipation to the time when they should reach Ferrybridge.

A charter of Edward III., 1346, made it the duty of each

township to maintain the road passing through it, by a toll levied on the traffic. From that small beginning the Turnpike or Toll-Bar system was developed. In 1662 the first Act of Parliament was passed for the making of Turnpike Roads to connect the chief towns, and from that date an improvement in the means of locomotion may be said to have set in all over the country.

On the 17th October, 1786, the first mail-coach from London to York set forth on its journey by the Great North Road. The first change of horses in Yorkshire was at Doncaster, and the next at Ferrybridge. By a superior and more durable system of road-making brought into vogue by Mr. Macadam early in the 19th century, the speed of the mails was greatly increased, the best coaches doing their regular average of ten miles an hour.

The following advertisement copied from "The Leeds Intelligencer" of 30th September, 1805, will serve to show the value of the Tolls a century ago.

TURNPIKE ROAD FROM DONCASTER TO TADCASTER: TOLLS TO BE LETT.

Notice is hereby given, that the Tolls arising at Doncaster, Ferrybridge, and Towton Bars, upon the said Road, will be Lett by Auction (separately) to the best bidder or bidders, at the house of Mr. John Hall, in Brotherton, on Thursday, the Twenty-fourth day of October next, at the hour of Twelve in the Forenoon, in the Manner directed by the Act passed in the Thirteenth Year of the Reign of His Majesty King George the Third, "for regulating the Turnpike-Roads," for such Terms, not exceeding Three Years, and on such conditions as shall be then agreed upon; which Tolls produced the last Year, above the expenses of collecting them—at Doncaster Bar **£1,505**; at Ferrybridge Bar £1,325; and at Towton Bar £550.

Whoever happens to be the best bidder or bidders, must at the same time give security, with sufficient sureties, to the satisfaction of the trustees of the said road, for payment of the rent agreed for, and at such times as they shall direct.

R. Wilkinson, Clerk to the said trustees.

September 24th, 1805.

The following is a list of the chief coaches that passed direct through Pontefract:—

1816—The "True Briton" commenced to run from the George Inn, Wakefield, at 6 a.m., by Pontefract,

Ferrybridge and Knottingley to Snaith, where it met the steam-packet, Monday, Wednesday and Friday; returning to Wakefield on the days following the arrival of the packet.

1821—The "Royal Forester" left the Greyhound Inn, Ferrybridge, 7 a.m., calling at the Elephant Inn, Pontefract, Castleford and Methley, to the Bull and Mouth Hotel, Leeds, every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday; returning from Leeds at 3-30 p.m. each day.

1829—The "George the Fourth" commenced to run from the Rose and Crown Inn, Leeds, at 5 a.m., by Castleford, Pontefract and Knottingley; arrived at Goole 10 a.m. in time for the steam-packet to Hull. On the death of George IV. in 1830, the name of this coach was changed to "William the Fourth."

1833—The "Emerald" between Leeds and Pontefract began to run from the Bull and Mouth Hotel, Leeds, daily at 4 p.m., returning from the Star Inn at Pontefract, at 8 a.m. the following day.

1843—The "Perseverance" commenced to run, leaving Doncaster daily at 6 a.m. via Pontefract and Castleford to Leeds; returning from the Bull and Mouth Hotel, Leeds, at 4 p.m. Fares 7s. inside; 4s. outside. This coach ceased running in 1846, owing to the general introduction of railways, and thus the era of the stage-coach passed away.

"Fell Time, posting down on the whirlwind of steam,
Left bedimmed in the distance, guard, coachman and team."

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, PONTEFRACT.

Ruined during the Sieges of 1644—8.
The Nave only (restored) is now used for Divine Service

CHAPTER XXVI.

"A dim and mighty minster of old time!
A temple shadowy with remembrances
Of the majestic past." *Mrs. Hemans.*

The Church of All Saints.

The ancient fabric of All Saints, commonly known as the "Old Church," and anciently designated "the minster of the north,"* is one of the most interesting relics of Old Pontefract.

As we stand within the ruins of this great and stately church, and gaze upon its shattered, weather-beaten walls and mouldering tombstones—most of whose inscriptions "All-conquering Time" has obliterated—the reflection is forced upon us that we behold the work of innumerable past worthies who in their day occupied the busy world. Sacred, indeed, is this venerable ruin, whose aisles have been trodden by succeeding generations of Pontefract inhabitants, and now, after the lapse of a few centuries, almost all knowledge of them individually has gone; all their acts of generosity and benevolence have borne their fruit, and passed away; nothing material is left to us concerning

"The dead
Who, slumbering in forgotten graves
Lie nameless."

A full history of this ancient church is a desideratum. Had we but a full catalogue of the magnificent series of Papal

* See Lawton's "Collections."

Records preserved in the Vatican at Rome, doubtless much of value and interest would be forthcoming, as in those archives are preserved an almost unbroken series of contemporary Letters, Orders and Instructions, relating to the English churches appropriated like All Saints to the Monasteries, from the time of Innocent III. (1198) to the Dissolution of the Religious Houses in 1539. Until this mine of archæological and ecclesiastical treasure is investigated, we can have no comprehensive history of Pontefract Old Church.

There was a church on the site in Pre-Norman Times dedicated to All Hallows, which foundation undoubtedly gave to the site of Pontefract its ancient name of Kirkby. In the Domesday entry of the Manor of Tateshelle (Tanshelf including Kirkby), there is specific mention of a church and a priest. The next definite mention of it is found in the original charter of Robert de Lacy (about 1092), in which he grants to his new foundation of the Monastery of St. John the Evangelist, among other benefices, the "Ecclesiam Omnium Sanctorum in predicta villa de Kyrkeby."

Of the church then in existence no trace is now to be seen. The oldest parts of the present fabric cannot be assigned to a date earlier than the middle of the 14th century.

A Vicarage was ordained 20th November, 1361, and a new ordination was made 15th August, 1452. A composition was made 31st December, 1533, between the mayor and commonalty of Pontefract and the Prior and Convent, touching the finding and sustaining of certain Chaplains within this Church. At the Dissolution, the patronage came to the Crown.

The Church in its perfect state comprised a Chancel and large South Chapel ; a Central Tower ; two Transepts, the one on the north having an eastern aisle ; a Nave with aisles, and a North and South Porch. These mostly belong to the latter part of the 14th century, but the elevation of the Nave and the lofty windows, with the upper part of the Tower, were added a little later, whilst what may have been a

Sacristy at the extreme east end of the north wall of the chancel appears to belong to the close of the 15th century.

The style is mostly Gothic, elaborate and graceful, showing exquisite blending of the hold and delicate ; the workmanship is believed to have been mostly done by the monks themselves, a race famous for their artistic skill, which they employed with religious zeal on those ecclesiastical edifices whose ruins still add a grace and beauty to many an English landscape.

The present ruinous state of the greater portion of this church at Pontefract is the direct result of the sieges of Pontefract Castle in 1646—9, as it was held as an outpost of the besieged, and was thus battered by the guns of the Roundheads.

The Parliament of 1649 granted £1000 from the proceeds of the sale of the materials of the dismantled castle towards its repair, and about the period of the Restoration (1660) nearly £1,500 was raised for the like purpose by donations and collections in many Yorkshire churches, but the money thus contributed appears to have been largely diverted into other channels. A portion of the Parliamentary grant was spent in the repair of St. Giles'. The £1,500 raised by collections was entrusted to the care of Dr. Nathaniel Johnson, the eminent antiquary, who is said to have embezzled the principal part of it. There is no evidence in the building itself that during the latter part of the 17th century any expense was incurred upon the repair of the fabric, except the Octagon on the Tower and the North Transept, the latter of which was used as a chapel in which to conduct funeral services, the adjoining churchyard being—with the exception of a solitary interment recorded in Friar Wood Orchard, and several in the Friends' Burial Ground in Southgate—the only burying-place for Pontefract during the next hundred years.

The original Lantern is described as having been exceedingly magnificent, but no print exists so far as we know to give us a clear idea of its beauty. Thomas Gent, the York historian, writing in 1739 (*i.e.*, 90 years after its destruction),

says that each of the outer corners of the Tower was formerly "enriched with a statue of the four evangelists, and from its centre sprang the Lantern, ornamented with the effigies of eight apostles standing on pedestals." The remains of this Lantern, left in a shattered condition by the sieges of the Castle, fell down in 1660.

In Pope Nicholas' Taxation of 1292, the Church is valued at £30 and the Vicarage at £16 per annum, and in the Valor Ecclesiasticus or Liber Regis of 1535 at £13 6s. 8d. (being the amount of pension paid by the Priory). In this Record four Chantries are named as being in the church.

The Parliamentary Survey made during the Commonwealth contains the following:—

> "We find only one parish Church situate in the lower part of the town, and so ruinated and demolished by the War about the Castle that it cannot be repaired again as before with less than £3,000 expense. Vicarage, the profits consisting of privy tithes and oblations, which for these three years last past hath not been worth above £10 per annum. Mr. Joseph Ferrett, a painful orthodox and pious Minister, is Parson there, by confirmation under the Great Seal, whose pains have been extraordinary in the work of the Ministry. There is no certain maintenance at all in a manner for the said Mr. Ferrett, the augmentation of £40 per annum, granted out of Charles Thimbleby's estate in the tithes of Carleton (a Papist and Delinquent), being denied him by the Committee for Sequestrations in this county, and the poverty of the town is such that they are like to lose their said Vicar for want of means for himself and family to live on."

Although Mr. Ferrett is here represented as Vicar of All Saints, we find him during the Commonwealth period as "minister" of St. Giles' Chapel, Pontefract. His name appears in the Registers there as signatory to a note stating that the Registers were blank from March, 1648, to 2nd April, 1649, "during the Rebellion, alias Loyalty," from which expression we gather that he was on the side of the Parliament. Soon after the Restoration he resigned the living and retired to Tanshelf, where he started the first Independent Chapel. He was succeeded at St. Giles by the Rev. Samuel Drake, D.D., son of the diarist of the Siege of Pontefract Castle.

The Notitia Parochialis of 1705 contains the following particulars:—

> "All the tithe corn and hay are impropriated. Pontefract tithe

corn to the Hon. W, Pierrepoint; tithe corn of Carleton to Lord Arglass; tithe corn of East Hardwick to Mr. Heward; tithe corn of Spittle Hardwick to Mr. Stub; tithe corn of Knottingley to Sir John Cope; tithe corn of Ferrybridge to John Savile, Esq.; tithe hay of Pontefract to R. Frank, Esq.; tithe hay of Knottingley to John Savile, Esq. The Church is endowed with all oblations, obventions and small tithe, together with wool, lamb, liquorice, hemp, line, rape and all manner of fruit, seeds, &c. 20s. given by William and Isabel Oates for an anniversary sermon on St. Thomas Day, and 20s. given by Alderman R. Moor for two sermons, one on May-day, and the other on All Saints-day. The parish church was burnt down and ruined. The chapel of St. Giles, in which we celebrate Divine Service, is all mightily decayed, and in great danger of falling. All the revenues belonging to St. Giles were taken away at the Dissolution. The Vicarage is not worth above £40 per annum. Only one close of glebe and a little house adjoining St. Giles Church."

"The tithe of wool and lamb, &c., of the inhabitants of Pontefract, growing in Pontefract Park, and likewise the tithe of wool and lamb of the inhabitants of Knottingley, put upon Brotherton Marsh, belong to the Vicar of Pontefract by ancient custom and decree. Note, that £5 per an. out of the tithe of Campsall, belonging to the Chapel of St. Clement's, and was always paid to the Vicars of Pontefract, and even since the Restoration, are now lost and passed away among concealments. We have two other Chapels, one at Knottingley, to which belongeth nearly £10 per annum in lands, but sacrilegiously made use of by the inhabitants for lay services. The other, at East Hardwick, which together with the school was founded (though not yet consecrated) by Stephen Cawood, and endowed with (present) £10; but about forty years hence, at the expiration of the lease, the lands belonging to the Chapel and school will be worth £60 per annum."

Signed, F. DRAKE, Vicar."

Catalogue of Vicars of All Saints.

	Dom:	Hugo de Birksburgh*
1267	,,	Antonio de Beck
1302	,,	Adam de Pollit
1316	,,	Nicholas de Erghes
1329	,,	William de Sutton
1338	,,	Roger de Paxton
1349	,,	Adam de Scargill
1349	,,	William de Sancto Albano
1350	,,	Hugo de Saxton
1355	,,	John de Becks
1361	,,	Adam de Scargill
1361	,,	Ricardo Douk
1365	,,	William Danke
——	,,	John Thornton
1437	,,	John Cudworth
1438	,,	John Whyte
1465	,,	Thomas Challoner

* See Torre's List.

1483	Dom.	Richard Berryman
1483	,,	Xtopher Bargh
1485	,,	John Stodfolde
1486	,,	Thomas Harryson
1489	,,	Peter Beke
1490	,,	Robert Cutteler
1503	,,	Thomas Bromflete
1506	,,	Robert Womersley
1532	,,	John Barker
1568	Rev.	Richard Asheton
1588	,,	Thomas Haman
1595	,,	Lawrence Barker
1597	,,	Thomas Pulleine
1624	,,	William Styles

The Rev. William Styles, M.A., who held the Vicarage during nearly the whole reign of Charles I., was born at Doncaster about the year 1596. His first preferment was the Vicarage of Ledsham, which he held from 1620 to 1624, when he was presented by Charles I. to the Vicarage of All Saints', Pontefract, which he retained until the year 1642, when he removed to Hessel-cum-Hull, where he succeeded Mr. Marvel, father of the celebrated Andrew Marvel. While at Pontefract Mr. Styles seems to have contracted some dislike to the ceremonies, and was prosecuted in the Ecclesiastical Court at York for baptising a child without making the sign of the cross. At Hull he was called upon to take the engagement, which he steadily refused to do, on which Bradshaw wrote to Lieutenant Colonel Salmon, deputy-governor of the town, to turn him by force out of the church.

This drew from his parishioners a petition on his behalf, offering to be bound for his peaceable demeanour. Bradshaw, however, would not tolerate a man of Styles' tried loyalty in a place of so much importance as Hull, and had him removed to London. A year later he was appointed to the Vicarage of Leeds. He maintained his loyalty to the Stuarts, and had the courage to pray publicly for the exiled king, but he did not live to see the Restoration, for it appears from the Leeds Registers that he was interred in his own church at Leeds, 16 March, 1659-60, a few months prior to the return of Charles II.

After the destruction of All Saints' in 1648-9, St. Giles'

Pontefract Parish Church with Market Cross.

Church became practically the Parish Church of Pontefract, though the parochial privileges were not legally transferred until 1787.

In 1831 the transepts of All Saints' were repaired and the Rev. Richard Stainforth, afterwards Vicar of St. Giles', licensed to preach therein. An ecclesiastical district was alloted to it in 1838. An endowment left by the Rev. Marmaduke Fothergill, of Pontefract, for a lectureship in St. Giles' was then transferred to All Saints', and became the nucleus of the endowment of the resuscitated benefice.

Present Vicar:—Rev. Edmund Silvester Hore, M.A.

St. Giles' Church.

This foundation is mentioned in a charter as early as the reign of Henry I., under the name of St. Mary de Foro, when it was, at the instance of Archbishop Thurston, granted by Hugh de Laval to the Priory of St. John the Evangelist in Pontefract.

It was subsequently enlarged, and the North-west part given by Ilbert de Lacy (2nd) to the Canons of St. Oswald at Nostel, and dedicated to that saint when the foundation came to be called St. Oswald's, with St. Giles' Chapel annexed. Subsequently, after various restorations and enlargements, it was known as St. Giles' Church. During the sieges of the Castle, the Parish Church of All Saints' was so much damaged as to be rendered unfit for the performance of divine services therein, and thus Pontefract was left with only one church, that of St. Giles.

In the Parliamentary Survey of the Commonwealth Period, it is stated:—

> "St. Giles' Chapel is a large building, situate in the Market Place and heart of the said town of Pontefract, being now the only convenient place of worship for the whole town; and therefore we think it fit that it be made the Parish Church there, and these towns and places to be annexed to it, viz:—Pontefract Town, Tanshelfe, Carleton, Pontefract Park, East Hardwick, and Spittle Hardwick, with Bubwith houses near Pontefract town-end. And we humbly recommend their necessitous condition to the State for maintenance of a minister

suitable to the great congregation and market town of Pontefract, consisting of many souls."

By an Act of Parliament passed 29 George III., this church was constituted the Parish Church, and consequently all the rights belonging to All Saints' Vicarage were transferred to St. Giles'. The Registers date from 1685 though they do not appear to have been kept from March 1648 to April 1649 owing to the distraction of the Civil War.

Lectureship of St. Giles'.

This was founded by the Rev. Marmaduke Fothergill, of Pontefract, and endowed by a grant 5 January, 1716, of "Friar Wood Pastures, &c., to Archbishop Dawes and his successors for ever, in trust, for the use of the said Marmaduke Fothergill and Dorothy Fothergill his wife, and of the longer liver of them, and afterwards for the support and maintenance of a catechist in the Chapel of St. Giles', or the Parish Church of Pontefract, which catechist the said Archbishop and his successors from time to time shall and may always nominate after the deaths of the said Marmaduke Fothergill and Dorothy his wife, only excepting and reserving the first nomination of such catechist to the longer liver of them as shall be expressed in the last will or other writing of such longer liver." Mrs. Fothergill died in 1753, and by her will appointed Francis Drake, D.D. The duty, as fixed by the Archbishop, comprised a lecture every other Sunday in the afternoon.*

The annual income of the estate in 1790 was £52.

This endowment was transferred to All Saints' Church in 1838.

Among the objects of interest in St. Giles, are two tattered flags belonging to the First Regiment West Yorkshire Militia, and a large picture of the Crucifixion, the work of a Pontefract artist about the beginning of the last century.

The walls are adorned with many marble tablets, two of which are memorials of former vicars:—The Rev. Dr. Thomas Bisset (1865 to 1878) and the Rev. James John Christie, M.A.,

* See Abp. Sharp's M.S., Vol. I., p. 366.

R.D. (1878 to 1899). On the North wall appears the following interesting inscription .—

"In memory of Thomas Blanco, who served with the 51st King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry throughout the Peninsular Campaign, and was one of a party who assisted to bury Sir John Moore at Corunna. He died at Pontefract July 11th, 1873, aged 90 years."

Over the gallery is a mural tablet inscribed :—

"Sacred to the memory of Captain Andrew Crewe of an aintient Family of that name in Cheshire, who, after 46 years spent with fidelity and reputation in the service of his country, retired to Pontefract, where he died August the 13th, 1744, aged 70 years. Also of William Crewe, who served the office of Mayor of this Corporation in the years 1740, 1753 and 1768, then resigned the gown and retired from public business. He died February the 21st, 1782, aged 76 years."

To the right of this is a large, elaborate mural tablet curiously inscribed as follows :—

"Consecrated to Truth Historical
Swinney the Brave, the Virtuous, and the Just,
Hath mixt his ashes with their native dust,
E'er manhood's honours dawned upon his face
He proved his arms against the Spanish race.
Wade, Stanhope, Merdaunt, Carpenter, Dalzell,
With truth and rapture, if alive, could tell
How fieree he fought whilst fighting aught avail'd,
How sullen yielded when our numbers fail'd,
From hair-breadth scapes, and bloody toils reliev'd,
Many he gave but ne'er a wound receiv'd.
He spurn'd at cowards with becoming pride,
Laurels his aim, and Providence his Guide.
In peace neglect'd, and reduced he sped
Without a murmur to his lonely shed—
Call'd forth at last by warlike George to view,
He drew his broad sword and he used it too.
His dauntless heart at Dettingen was try'd
When Brunswick glow'd with William at his side.
Grown old yet vig'rous in his country's cause
The King dismissed him with a loud applause,
But soon as traytors sought his Master's Right,
And English troops for once forgot to fight,
Soon as the bleeding son was prisoner made,
And fools were sheltered by their white cockade,
He left his vine, his figtree and his wife,
And rush'd impetuous to the doubtful strife.
The Dirk and Target grace his joyous Hall,
Crown'd by his sword, cuirass and iron cawl.
Should busy mortals ask "How much he gave
To his five children e'er he sought the grave?"

Fortunes he gave whilst living to his sons,
And to his daughters blessed portions—
Portions! the best that children can receive.
Fortunes! the best that best of men can give,
He form'd their minds to ev'ry Gospel Grace
(His better self assistant in her place).
When rip'ning years demanded other cares,
Nor cost nor pains for learned guides he spared.
Bless, Reader, bless with thy reluctant tears,
This Christian Soldier in the vale of years.
Lov'd by his comrades, by his troop rever'd,
By good men courted, by the wicked fear'd.
If honor, truth and justice can ensure
Bliss to his soul, in bliss it lives secure.

Major Matthew Swinney was born in the Kingdom of Ireland in the year of our Lord 1684. He married Mary, eldest daughter of Robert Kitchingman, Esq., by whom he had issue 3 sons and 2 daughters, all his survivors. He dyed on March the 3rd, 1766, aged 82, and was interred within the choir of the old church."

———o———

Late vicars of St. Giles' :—

Rev. Richard Stainforth, M.A., 1832 to 1865.
Rev. Thomas Bisset, LL.D., 1865 to 1878.
Rev. James John Christie, M.A., R.D., 1878 to 1899.
Rev. William Gell, M.A., 1899.

POST SCRIPTUM.

To the student much that we have treated of in these Chronicles of Old Pontefract, will no doubt be familiar, but for many readers it may not have been superfluous to gather together these gleanings from many sources, into a connected general narrative. It is manifest that a book of this kind must be gathered from older books or manuscripts, unless it is to be entirely a work of imagination, in which case it would be worthless.

In our endeavour to condense within the compass of about 200 pages the local history of many centuries, we are fully conscious that we have dealt far from exhaustively with our subject. Whilst it has been our aim to deal succinctly with every aspect of Pontefract life and history, it is impossible not to have omitted many things in the annals of a town so long and so closely bound up with events of great national concern. A comprehensive and detailed History of Pontefract would fill many volumes, and its cost of production would render the work prohibitive to the general public, for whom these Chronicles are mainly intended.

Our effort has been guided by one motive throughout, viz., to show the real antiquity of Pontefract, and to indicate its true place in our national history. We trust therefore, that this book, whatever imperfections it may possess, will be welcomed by all those who are interested in the history of their native town. Visitors to Pontefract, also, will find much to attract them in the many historic objects mentioned in these pages.

L. P.

APPENDICES.

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APPENDIX A.

Castilion Morris, son of Colonel John Morris, governor of Pontefract Castle 1648-9, is said to have been born in Pontefract Castle during the Third Siege, which occasioned his Christian name, Castilion.

He was brought up to the law, and on 6 March, 1684, was created by Charles, Duke of Somerset, Muster-master of the Train-bands for the East Riding of Yorkshire. Later during the same year he became Town Clerk of Leeds, and was afterwards the author of "The History and Surprise of Pontefract Castle by Colonel John Morris, with the Trial of the said Colonel Morris and Cornet Blackburne, with their Behaviour and Speeches at their execution at York, 23 August, 1649."

Castilion Morris died at Leeds, 18 December, 1702, aged 54.

APPENDIX B.

ST. NICHOLAS HOSPITAL.

We have no record bearing on the foundation of this Religious House. It certainly existed in Saxon Times, as may be seen from the Domesday Entry of Taushelf.

The late Mr. Richard Holmes in his "Topography of Pontefract," published in 1873, argues that it probably owes its origin to Tada, Tate, otherwise Ethelburga, sister of the King of Kent. She became the wife of Edwin, King of Northumbria, and by bringing with her to the Northumbrian Court her own priest, Paulinus, was the means of re-establishing Christianity in the northern Kingdom.

The line of argument followed by Mr. Holmes is:—

1. She came northward a Christian princess.
2. It became a custom in her time, to call the land belonging to a particular hamlet after the owner, and therefore her manor of Tateshalle, part of her dowry, received her name.
3. She introduced scriptural practices—one-tenth of that manor was given to the poor.

Now here is St. Nicholas Hospital, to which no date of origin can be

given, but which can clearly be proved to have existed before the 11th century. At the Domesday Survey in 1086, about one-tenth of the Township was "almsland," and there is no other foundation to which it can have belonged, except St. Nicholas Hospital. Its being a tenth of the whole manor seems to indicate a religious dedication by the owner of the manor.

After the date of Domesday, the materials exist for a more authentic history of the foundation. It appears that when Robert de Lacy was about to found the Pontefract Monastery, he placed the original monks from Normandy in the buildings of St. Nicholas Hospital, till their own house was ready for occupation, and when they removed he gave them the wardenship of the hospital.

Nearly two centuries after (1274), Henry de Lacy procured from Edward I. for Robert Wodehouse its then warden, and his successors, free warren on lands in Methley, Houghton, Castleford, and (Spital) Hardwick. A document dated 1294, a copy of which is inserted in the Chartulary of St. Oswald Priory at Nostell, records an agreement between "Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, and William Nouy, of the Hospital of Saint Nicholas in Pontfreit on the one p'tie, and William, prior of Saint John and the Convent in Pontfreit on the other p'tie," by which the warden of the Hospital covenanted to pay 60s in lieu of a former payment of "12 hopes of wheat, 24 hopes of haver (oats), and 13s 4d in money," on condition that the prior and convent cease to make any claim upon the title of Pontefract Park, about the right to which there was some dispute between the Priors of St. John and St. Oswald.

Fifty years later, Henry, Earl of Lancaster granted to Robert de Oaten, Warden of the Hospital, and to his successors, common pasture in Pontefract Park.

When in 1399 the estates of the Duchy of Lahcaster became merged in the royal possessions, and the Dukes of Lancaster, now kings of England, ceased to make Pontefract Castle their permanent residence, a series of alienations of the properties and privileges of the Hospital began, until just prior to the Dissolution of the Monasteries it passed into lay possession, and became in course of time vested in the Mayor and burgesses of Pontefract, being used as an almshouse for aged and indigent poor.

In the Corporation Entries under date 1672 is a reference to a benefaction of £100 towards the rebuilding of St. Nicholas Hospital. The donor was a Richard Sayle, tallow chandler, and the circumstances of his gift were recorded on a tablet placed upon the walls of the building.

Still later (in 1762) Alderman Perfect repaired the Hospital at a cost of £40.

Within our own time the building has been demolished, and a similar fate has befallen the Bead Houses, another old Pontefract landmark. The disappearance of these old historic buildings we note with regret.

APPENDIX C.

The Lord John Clifford, whose history is so remarkably connected with the House of York, was slain at the battle of Brotherton Marsh, leaving as the inheritor of his title and vast estates, an infant heir, Henry, afterwards tenth Lord Clifford. Having rendered himself odious to the Yorkists, in consequence of his having slain the young prince, Edmund, Earl of Rutland, at Wakefield battle, the deceased Lord Clifford was attainted by Act of Parliament. His widow, fearing that the Yorkists would avenge themselves on the heir of a man who had incurred their bitterest enmity, fled with her child to the wildest recesses of Cumberland, and effectually concealed him, under the garb of a shepherd boy, from all knowledge of those political enemies who would probably have sacrificed the child in retaliation for the father's crimes.

For the space of twenty-four years, the unconscious victim of political hatred tended his sheep, alike unaware of his noble birth as of the maternal solicitude which watched unsuspected over the life of the mountain boy. After spending the prime of his days in perfect seclusion, during the reigns of Edward IV., Edward V. and Richard III., his name and title were at length made known to him, and in the thirty-second year of his age he was fully restored to his ancestral honours by Henry VII.

On his restoration to "all his baronies," he placed himself under the tuition of the monks of Bolton Priory, and at his adjoining ancestral abode "Barden Tower," he prosecuted the favourite studies of the period. Amongst the archives of the Clifford race are yet preserved records that testify the interest he took in astronomy, alchemy and other philosophical pursuits, and the zeal with which he devoted himself to such branches of knowledge.

Moreover, he also gave proof that the warlike genius of "the stout Lord Clifford" had slumbered—not slept—in the person of their remarkable descendant, for at the advanced age of sixty, casting aside his peaceful studies, and exchanging the philosopher's gown for the coat of mail, he acted a conspicuous part at the battle of Flodden Field.

The entire career of "the shepherd lord" forms perhaps one of the wildest tales of romance which real life ever presented. He lived under the rule of six English monarchs, and whether his eventful history is considered with reference to the vicissitudes that marked his early days, the calm dignity and true wisdom that he displayed when emerging from abject poverty to fendal power, or the chivalrous feeling he evinced when distinguishing himself at the close of life on the battle field, admiration cannot fail to be elicited at the strong, natural understanding, the innate dignity, and the extraordinarily firm and vigorous mind which in all the stirring scenes of his unparalleled career characterised the chequered life of "the shepherd lord," whose memory, after the lapse of three hundred years, is still revered by the people of Upper Wharfedale.

APPENDIX D.

The great Earl of Warwick, "the king-maker," was slain at the Battle of Barnet in 1471. The rapidity with which noble blood may, under adverse circumstances, filter down to the lower strata of society, is strikingly exemplified in the following facts:—

The last male Plantagenet, Edward, Earl of Warwick, son of the Duke of Clarence, was beheaded in 1499. In him and his sister, Margaret de la Pole, who was beheaded in 1541, several royal descents converged. Margaret Pole left a daughter Ursula, whose husband, Henry Lord Stafford, could also boast of several royal descents through both his father and mother. Their third son, Richard, was the father of two children, Roger and Jane. The latter married a joiner and had a son who was a working cobbler in Shropshire in 1637, in which year her brother Roger became entitled to succeed to the Stafford barony, though compelled by Charles I. to relinquish his claim to it on account of his poverty.—See Foster's "Royal Lineage of Noble Families."

APPENDIX E.

After the death of Richard II. at Pontefract Castle, the Percies in a manifesto openly accused Henry IV. of repeated acts of perjury, of swearing to them on the "Holy Gospells" that he only entered England to recover his inheritance, and afterwards imprisoning the king and obliging him with menaces of death to renounce his crown and kingdom, "under coulor of whiche resignacion, thou hast crowned thyself kyng of the realmes aforesaid, and has seazed all the castles and lordshippes perteignyng to the king's crowne contrary to thine othe, wherefore thou art forsworn and false. Also we do alledge saie and entende to prove that whereas thou sworest to us upon the Gospells that our sovereign lorde and thyne, Kyng Richarde, should reigne duryng the terme of his life in his royall prerogative and dignitee, thou hast caused the same our sovereign lorde and thyne, traiterously within the castell of Pomfret without the consent or judgment of the lordes of the realme, by the space of fifteen daies and so many nightes (whiche is horible among Christian people to be heard) with honger, thirst and colde to perishe, to be murdered, wherefore thou art perjured and false. Also we do alledge saie and entende to prove that thou at that tyme when our sovereign lorde and thyne Kyng Richard was so by that horible murder ded as above saied, thou by extorte power diddest usurpe and take the kyngdom of Englande, unjustly and wrongfully contrary to thine othe, from Edmonde Mortimer Earl of Marche, then next and direct heir imediately by due course of inheritance after the deceasse of the forsaied Richarde. Wherefore thou art perjured and false. For the whiche cause we defy thee, thy fautores and complices, as comen traytouries and destroyers of the realme, and the invadours, oppressers and confounders of the verie true and right heires to the crowne of Englande, whiche thynge we entende with our handes to prove this daie, Almighty God helping us." (From Hall's Chronicles).

That Richard II. was murdered by order of Henry IV. in Pontefract Castle seems certain, and the guilt of this murder ever clung to the house of Lancaster, and caused afterwards the kings and princes of that line to be destroyed by the Yorkists without mercy or compunction.

APPENDIX F.

THE EARL OF STRAFFORD'S BURIAL PLACE.

It is commonly believed that the body of the famous Earl of Strafford was conveyed after his execution to the Church of Wentworth Woodhouse, in Yorkshire, and buried there. A statement to this effect appears on the contemporary monument over the supposed tomb, and historians have relied upon its accuracy. But apparently the whole story is wrong. The Rev. R. A. Gatty, rector of Hooton Roberts, near Rotherham, has an interesting paper in "The Cornhill" for July, 1905, in which he states that when the tomb was examined some years ago "it was found that no burial had ever taken place there." Lady Strafford, who died at an advanced age, and her daughter, who died young, were buried at Hooton Roberts, and Mr. Gatty makes out a pretty clear case, showing that the Earl had previously been buried there, very probably at her ladyship's wish. Outrages on tombs of political men were not unknown in those days, and there was at least this reason for a secret burial. The "discovery" was made when the floor of Hooton Chancel was taken up for the purpose of laying an air drain.

"The work was put into the hands of a skilled mason, and one morning he came to tell me that two bodies, very much decomposed—in fact, all dust except a few bones—had been found just under the flags, lying north and south, not east and west; and now another coffin had appeared in a similar position. I went to the church, and found that immediately in front of the communion table a burial had taken place; as I stood in the trench, I could trace the outline of a coffin in the dry soil, its shape being that of a casket with sloping lid and sides. A fragment of the wood of the coffin showed that it had originally been studded with brass nails, and probably covered with cloth. The end of the coffin had fallen out, and a skull could be seen through the dust. When touched with the hand, the skull fell into the trench, leaving the vertebræ exposed. The mason put down his hand to gather them up and place them on the communion step. I was examining the skull at the moment, when the mason exclaimed, "Why, one of these vertebræ has been cut clean in half!" At that time any thought of finding Lord Strafford's body had never crossed my mind, although I knew Lady Strafford was buried somewhere in the church; even when I saw the cut vertebræ I did not at once realise the truth. This only dawned upon me afterwards when I had examined the bones of the other bodies. Before reaching the body in front of the communion table, the workmen had found two others in line with it on the south side. Both were very much decayed; but one skull was perfect, and was undeniably that of an old woman, while other bones were those of a young person."

Apparently the Hooton registers throw no light on the subject, but Lady Strafford's will directed that she should be buried in Hooton Church "at night, that no one was to know the spot, and no monument or tombstone was to be erected to her memory." Mr. Gatty very naturally asks, "Why such secrecy, unless there was a secret to be kept?" It is a subject upon which local antiquaries may be able to throw more light.

APPENDIX G.

THE MUNICIPALITY OF PONTEFRACT FOR 1905-6.

THOMAS RALPH RAMSDEN, Mayor.

ALDERMEN:

Mr. T. SWALES (1907)	MR. T. GLOVER (1910)
MR. W. G. SCHOFIELD (1907)	MR. C. S. LOWDEN (1910)
Mr. T. R. RAMSDEN (1907)	MR. WORDSWORTH (1910)

RETURNING OFFICERS:—South Ward, MR. T. WORDSWORTH; North Ward, MR. T. GLOVER; West Ward, MR. C. S. LOWDEN.

COUNCILLORS:

WEST WARD.	SOUTH WARD.	NORTH WARD.
*Mr. S. LOWDEN.	Mr. J. ROBINSON.	Mr. W. Mc. GOWAN.
*Mr. T. WARD.	Mr. F. W. PEASE.	Mr. G. S. GARDINER.
†Mr. A. WALKER.	Mr. O. HOLMES.	Mr. HECKINGBOT'M
†Mr. S. H. GARSIDE.	Mr. C. WILCOCK.	Mr. G. BROWN.
‡Mr. J. W. HEMMANT.	Mr. A. WILSON.	Mr. A. BLACKBURN
‡Mr. E. C. ATKINSON	Mr. C. ADDINGLEY.	Mr. J. TAYLOR.

* Retire 1906. † Retire 1907. ‡ Retire 1908.

Mr. W. HADDOCK, TOWN CLERK.

Mr. H. K. KABERRY, ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK.

Mr. S. M. LOWDEN and Mr. A. GIBSON, RATE COLLECTORS AND ACCOUNTANTS.

Mr. J. E. PICKARD, BOROUGH SURVEYOR.

MAGISTRATES:

Mr. ROBERT HORTON VERNON WRAGGE (RECORDER, 1905).

Mr. J. HARTLEY (1879)	Mr. W. J. ROBSON (1892)
Mr. J. RHODES (1883)	Mr. W. R. MAUD ,,
Mr. J. TAYLOR (1883)	Mr. T. WORDSWORTH (1898)
Mr. W. CONDER (1886)	Mr. F. W. PEASE ,,
Mr. B. HARTLEY (1886)	Mr. R. MARSHALL ,,
Mr. J. G. LYON (1892)	Mr. T. SWALES ,,
Mr. J. HILLABY (1892)	Mr. A. WALKER (1904)
Mr. R. D. RYDER (1892)	Mr. E. C. ATKINSON ,,
HIS HONOUR JUDGE CADMAN (92)	Mr. W. G. SCHOFIELD ,,

Mr. W. HADDOCK, CLERK TO THE MAGISTRATES.

Mr. H. K. KABERRY, DEPUTY-CLERK TO THE MAGISTRATES.

Mr. JOHN ROUTLIDGE, CLERK OF THE PEACE.

Major W. B. ARUNDEL, CORONER for the HONOUR OF PONTEFRACT.

Mr. J. EYRE POPPLETON, Deputy Coroner.

—:o:—

SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE:—Mr. PERCY HOLLIS

INSPECTOR OF POLICE:—Mr. FRED SYKES.

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* From Holmes's Book of Pontefract Views. 1/-.

ERRATA.

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Page 27 line 27 for Emperior read Emperor.
,, 48 ,, 38 for Pontefract read Peckfield.
,, 67 ,, 11 for Eitz-Enstace read Fitz-Enstace.
,, 77 ,, 7 for Potterlame read Potterlawe.
,, 83 ,, 14 for Wallace read Wallis.
,, 135 ,, 34 for Trasferred read Transferred.
,, 180 ,, 11 for John read James.